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WHEN TALKING HELPS: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF PRIVACY AND
RESILIENCE AFTER BEREAVEMENT

A Dissertation

Presented to
the Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Carrie L. West

June 2012

Advisor: Mary Claire Morr Serewicz

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Abstract

Using the theoretical framework of Communication Privacy Management, this study sought to determine how trait resilience, state hopefulness, distress disclosure, use of social networks, and boundary turbulence relate to bereaved spouses' life satisfaction. Bereaved spouses (N=149) completed questionnaires at Camp Widow, a weekend-long conference for bereaved spouses held in San Diego, from August 12-14, 2011. Participants were single, engaged or remarried. The average age of the participants is 46.24 years. The average age at time of bereavement reported was 43.71 years. The amount of time that had passed since the death of their spouse was 2.83 years, and the average time participants reported being married was 17.7 years. The percentage of participants who reported having children at the time of their spouse's death was 83.67%. Only 6% of participants were remarried at the time of the study. The average annual income reported by participants was \$67, 689. Finally, 93% of participants were white, 142 were female and 7 were male. Using the data collected at Camp Widow, three structural equations models were evaluated for best fit to the data. Results indicate that trait resilience directly predicted state hopefulness, distress disclosure, and boundary turbulence, and that state hopefulness and boundary turbulence predicted life satisfaction. Resilience reported an indirect effect on life satisfaction. Results also indicate the model that best fit the data from the current study was the one in which the relationship between trait resilience and life satisfaction was mediated by state

hopefulness, distress disclosure, use of social networks, and boundary turbulence. This study further supports the role of communication in the process of resilience. Possible avenues for further research are explored.

Keywords: communication privacy management, bereaved, resilience, boundary turbulence

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Chapter One: Introduction

In the United States, approximately 1 million people are widowed each year, (Jayson, 2010) and according to Census data, approximately 4.5% of the US population is widowed. The death of one's spouse is often considered the most stressful life event one will encounter (Holmes & Rahe, 1967; Norris & Murrell, 1990). As this is such a significant event, there has been much interest in, and research into, spousal bereavement. One aspect of bereavement that is of particular interest to scholars is the psychological construct of resilience, or one's ability to overcome adversity. Theorists have suggested that disclosure of personal feelings and information is important after bereavement. While there has been interest in the disclosure process in the psychology literature, as it relates to resilience, and significant research exists in the communication literature related to disclosure, there is very little research on how this communication behavior relates to the overall process of resilience. Therefore, it is the intent of this study to address (1) how communication processes of resilience relate to perceptions of recovery and (2) how resilience processes are influenced by the protection and disclosure of private information.

Widowhood generally occurs later in life, and three fourths of those who are widowed are over the age of 65, however, about 2% are under the age of 40 (US Census Bureau, 2010). Regardless of age, however, bereaved spouses report increased distress

as a result of the loss of their primary relationship (Lindstrom, 1997). Resilience, or the ability to bounce back or adapt after this type of trauma or loss, is influenced by individual, social, and community factors. Most of the research into these multiple factors has originated in the field of psychology. Scholars' understanding of resilience would certainly benefit if this construct were studied in multiple disciplines, however, and communication scholars have done very little to contribute to the body of knowledge regarding resilience.

One of the few attempts to study resilience from a communication perspective has come from Patrice Buzzanell (2010). In the keynote address at the International Communication Association conference in 2010, Buzzanell suggested five communication resilience processes that share multiple similarities to processes discussed in psychology literature, yet specifically address the communication aspect of these processes. One recurring, common element of resilience processes is the negotiation of sharing and protecting personal information. Because these privacy behaviors are important aspects of dealing with bereavement, communication scholars are in a uniquely qualified position to contribute meaningful information to the study of resilience. Thus, it is the purpose of the present study to investigate the relationships between trait resilience, resilience processes related to privacy management, and overall life satisfaction of individuals who have experienced spousal bereavement.

Bereavement

Therapists and scholars agree that grief after bereavement is an individualized experience influenced by many variables (Breen & O'Connor, 2007). For example, an

individual's grief experience is shaped by the circumstances surrounding the death, such as whether the death was illness-related and expected, or unexpected (Carr, House, Wortman, Nesse & Kessler, 2001; Tye, 1993), and whether the surviving spouse blamed the deceased for death (Field, Bonanno, Williams, & Horowitz, 2000). Additionally, the quality of the relationship with the deceased greatly influences bereavement and adjustment (Carr & House, 2000). Finally, individual characteristics of the bereaved such as age (Dillenburg & Keenan, 2005), gender (Lund, Caserta, & Dimond, 1986), individual coping style, and the presence of an interpersonal support network (Breen & O'Connor, 2007) influence an individual's ability to adapt after bereavement.

Challenges to stage-models of grief.

For decades, there has been widespread support of stage-type models in the literature, and these models have been the most widely discussed approach for explaining the grief process since the early 1900s. However, these early stage models of grief have been challenged recently as empirical findings contradict, or at least cannot confirm, their utility (Breen & O'Connor, 2007). Stage models of grief are based on the assumptions that bereaved individuals must work through their grief and sever ties with the deceased and that individuals move through stages of grief in a fairly linear fashion (Breen & O'Connor). However, these assumptions may actually hinder healthy bereavement processes (Rando, 1993).

Furthermore, when an individual experiences grief in ways inconsistent with the stage-model type assumptions, the bereaved may not get needed support from friends and family or practitioners simply because their grief process is outside of what is

considered normal and expected and is assumed to be maladaptive (Walter, 2000). This may cause individuals to police their own grief process rather than adapting in ways that are more natural (Walter). A further critique of the grief models is that they only represent those on whom most of the early studies were based: North American, white, older, middle-class, widows who lost their husbands due to illness (Stroebe, Stroebe, & Schut, 2003).

More recently, multiple authors have conducted extensive research that supports the importance of understanding the navigation of the grief process, and at the same time, have also attempted to redress weakness in the more traditional stage models and assumptions about grief (Boohan, McGuinness & Tres, 1993, as cited Dillenburg and Keenan, 2005; Rando, 1993; Stroebe & Schut, 1999; Stroebe et al., 2003; Walter, 2000). For example, one alternative to the linear models is the Dual Process Model (DPM). The DPM was developed by Stroebe and Schut and suggests that there are two simultaneous processes of bereavement, which are loss and restoration. Also, during the early 1990s, researchers began to challenge the assumption that the ultimate goal of the bereavement process is a severing of the connection to the deceased person (Breen & O'Connor, 2007). Empirical findings have suggested that bonds might continue to exist with the deceased and still be a part of a healthy bereavement process (Fraley & Shaver, 1999).

Finally, several theorists have challenged the assumption of the traditional models that state the bereaved must work through and express their emotional pain in order to adapt (Bonanno & Keltner, 1997; Stroebe, Schut, & Stroebe, 2005). This notion is challenged by findings that suggest bereaved individuals experience less distress and

show less disruption in the second year after the death of a loved one when they express positive emotions and avoid negative emotions when discussing the deceased (Bonanno, Keltner, Holen, & Horowitz, 1995).

Privacy and challenges of bereavement.

Regardless of the approach for recovery, theorists agree on some common challenges bereaved individuals must work to overcome, and many of these challenges are linked to privacy and disclosure. For example, researchers agree that bereaved individuals are challenged to deal with emotional pain (Harvey, Orbuch, Weber, Merbach, & Alt, 1992). Although theorists may disagree about the best methods for dealing with emotional pain, they consistently agree about the importance of being able to talk about one's feelings with friends and family members in one's social network (Ramírez-Esparza & Pennebaker, 2006; Rouse, Longo, & Trickett, n.d.). Additionally, bereaved individuals are challenged to maintain and develop intimate bonds with the living (Radke-Yarrow, Sherman, Stilwell, & Field, 1990). Although disclosure of personal information does not necessarily lead to intimacy (Petronio, 2002), disclosure is often linked to intimacy and relational development (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Jourard, 1959).

An inherent challenge to those recovering from bereavement is an individual's management of competing desires related to privacy. A bereaved individual must weigh his or her compulsion to talk about intense feelings (Stiles, 1987), and the desire to bond with others through disclosure (Vangelisti, 1994), against the desire for privacy. Bereaved individuals may want to protect their private information for several reasons,

including a fear of discussing uncomfortable topics (Petronio, 2002), a desire to avoid vulnerability (Petronio), a desire to promote a sense of cohesion in a relationship (Vangelisti & Caughlin, 1997), or a need to influence how they are viewed by others (Omarzu, 2000). Because resilience in the face of bereavement challenges is intertwined with issues of privacy and disclosure, communication privacy management (CPM) provides a promising theoretical lens to investigate the role privacy plays in the resilience processes.

Communication Privacy Management

Disclosure has been a topic of investigation for theorists for decades (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Berger & Calabrese, 1975; Jourard, 1959; Jourard & Lasakow, 1958), and the enduring nature of inquiry into disclosure attests to its relevance and complexity. Early research on self-disclosure related to topics such as tastes, interests, attitudes, opinions, work, money, and personality (Jourard & Lasakow). Researchers in these early studies also examined demographic characteristics of both the discloser and the confidant that were most likely to encourage disclosure, and to whom individuals were most likely to disclose (Jourard; Jourard & Lasakow). CPM extends disclosure research while also sharpening the focus of the investigation by concentrating only on the disclosure of private information.

CPM also addresses disclosure by focusing on the many situations in our daily lives that require us to decide “to tell or not to tell” (Petronio, 2002, p.1). In other words, the foundational dialectical tension addressed by CPM is one between wanting to disclose private information and wanting to protect private information (Petronio &

Caughlin, 2006). However, CPM theory distinguishes itself from other self-disclosure literature on three points. First, CPM limits the scope of disclosure investigation to private information. Second, CPM applies a rule-based system for managing private information. Third, CPM extends the application of the theory beyond the individual level to include groups and organizations (Petronio, 2002).

First, Petronio (2002) explains the unique approach taken by CPM by making a distinction between private disclosure, (self-)disclosure, and intimacy. CPM concentrates only on private disclosure, which is a unique type of disclosure. In other words, it is possible to self-disclose, for example, one's occupation, and still not to reveal private information. CPM conceptualizes private information as something an individual feels he or she owns and has the right to control (Petronio & Caughlin, 2006). Private disclosure includes "information about one's self that is rather private or intimate and is disclosed under special circumstances" (Goodstein & Reinecker, 1974, cited in Petronio, 2002, p. 5). CPM also argues that because individuals feel ownership over their own private information, each person may share that information with others, and thus, create co-ownership of the information (Petronio).

CPM (Petronio, 2002) also emphasizes that self-disclosure is not equivalent to intimacy. Although early research linked or equated intimacy and disclosure, Petronio contends that the two are independent of each other. For example, Jourard (1959) argued that willingness to disclose might be a measure of the intimacy between two people, thus linking disclosure and intimacy. Jourard also found a positive correlation between liking,

disclosure, and disclosure reciprocation. Similarly, social penetration theory (Altman & Taylor, 1973) hypothesized that self-disclosure resulted in greater intimacy.

However, Petronio (2002) argues that, rather than self-disclosure leading to or reflecting intimacy, that privacy and intimacy are *both* separately, and fundamentally, related to the act of disclosure. Although intimacy may (or may not) result from self-disclosure, there are other dimensions to intimacy (Petronio).

The second point on which CPM distinguishes itself from other disclosure theories is through a focus on rules and a rule-based system of disclosure (Petronio, 2002). Because there are choices and negotiations in every disclosure, and individuals must consider the ramifications of disclosing or not disclosing, a rule-based, systematic and theoretical approach applied to disclosures helps to clarify the complex disclosure process.

Finally, CPM looks not only at disclosures about one's self, but also includes groups or multiple individuals within privacy boundaries (Petronio, 2002). By including multiple levels of privacy boundaries, CPM extends the types of disclosures and the complexity of the relationships involved in disclosures. As such, CPM is ideal for understanding families, as well as individual members of families, and their rules for regulating the disclosure of private information (Petronio).

There are five fundamental suppositions of CPM. The first is that disclosure of private information is the focus of this theory (Petronio, 2002). Private disclosure is “the *process* of telling and reflects the *content* about others and us” (Petronio, p. 6). The

designation of information as private is a key and distinguishing feature of CPM compared to other theories of disclosure.

Second, CPM employs a metaphor of boundaries to describe the line marking the limits between private and public information (Petronio, 2002). Individuals who have access to certain private information are all within the same privacy boundary together, while those who do not have access are on the outside of the boundary (Petronio). The boundary line extends around and includes individuals and their shared information. The metaphoric boundary lines of CPM allow for multiple levels of boundaries that may encompass an individual, a dyad, or a group such as a family, organization, or community (Petronio). Also, the boundary metaphor accounts for multiple and simultaneous boundary management, since individuals operating in social networks, at any given moment, are managing their own personal privacy boundaries as well as multiple collective boundaries (Petronio).

The third supposition of CPM is that individuals feel they should have both control and ownership of their private information. “We equate preserving privacy with maintaining personal dignity and autonomy and with safeguarding the self” (Petronio, 2002, p. 9). Individuals feel ownership over information about one’s self and want to control who has access to that information. In part, this need for control results from the vulnerability individuals feel when others have access to their private information (Petronio).

The fourth supposition of CPM is that the management of privacy is predicated on a rule-based system (Petronio, 2002). CPM argues that we use rules to manage all of

our boundaries, both individual boundaries and collective or co-owned boundaries.

Rules are especially important when there is more than one owner of private information because “there is an expected guardianship of the information often assumed by both the discloser and recipient” (Petronio, p. 11). CPM proposes that there *at least* three processes by which rules help to manage privacy. The first refers to the ways that the rules developed and the properties of these rules, the second is the process of how members coordinate the boundary, and the third refers to boundary turbulence.

Finally, CPM’s foundation is based on the assumption that privacy and disclosure exist as dialectical tensions (Petronio, 2002). Petronio describes dialectics as “the assumption that in social life, people experience tensions between opposites and contradictions” (p. 12). CPM is grounded in what Petronio calls the *unity of dialectics*, which includes disclosure-privacy, concealing-revealing, public-private, openness-closedness, and autonomy-connectedness (Baxter and Montgomery, 1996).

Unlike previous self-disclosure literature, CPM treats the disclosure of private information as a process considered in terms of degree (Petronio, 2002). In other words, when information is disclosed it becomes less private and more public (Petronio). CPM emphasizes that disclosure and privacy are not independent, but rather that they can only exist in relationship to each other (Petronio).

According to CPM, when we consider disclosing private information in a relationship we evaluate the ramifications of maintaining disclosure and privacy in that choice. When considering what information to disclose or make public or private, people make choices about how private and how public they want to be in each individual

interaction. In giving up one, the individual maintains the other. CPM considers both the discloser and the listener as important components in the process of disclosing private information. This approach recognizes the complex nature of disclosure and allows for the rules to change over time.

Privacy rules may also change as needed in response to an event or a redefinition of a relationship (Petronio, 2002). Rules need to be adjusted to coordinate privacy boundaries and manage turbulence caused by “an unpredictable situation, a change in our lives that is unplanned, or a novel event that may *trigger* a new rule or modification in our existing privacy rules” (Petronio, p. 80). When individuals and families are faced with an unexpected and novel situation, such as bereavement, self-disclosure is likely to involve private feelings. In fact, self-disclosure of emotions is often encouraged and thought to increase one’s ability to overcome challenges during bereavement (Cluck & Cline, 1986; Worden, 1991). Additionally, an individual’s flexibility in the expression and suppression of emotions is associated with the individual’s ability to overcome challenges of bereavement (Bonanno, et al, 2004).

Finally, as newly bereaved individuals are adapting their privacy boundaries and negotiating new rules for privacy, there are instances when privacy boundaries are not coordinated satisfactorily and boundary turbulence will occur. Bereaved individuals are especially vulnerable to boundary turbulence because they are experiencing multiple and simultaneous challenges related to privacy. Because of this life change, even the privacy rules that worked for them previously will need to be adapted to their new situation.

As bereaved individuals work through their challenges, including those related to privacy, some are better able to overcome their challenges, and sometimes even thrive in the midst of these challenges. Several theorists have investigated the reasons and ways that some individuals are better able overcome long-lasting or situation-specific life challenges including bereavement. Determining how to overcome significant life events and thrive is the basis for the study of resilience.

Resilience

Introduction to resilience.

The study of resilience has progressed from foundations based on an investigation of children who demonstrated better than expected life-skills despite high-risk maternal schizophrenia (Garmezy, 1974) to encompass a wide variety of contexts and to include not only individuals, but families and communities as well. To date, much of the research has focused on the individual traits that enhance resilience such as cognitive abilities, and the ability to form positive relationships. A more ecological approach, that addresses environmental factors, has been taken by some authors (Werner & Smith, 1977). Resilience is likely to be a combination of personality traits and learned processes, or what Buzzanell (2010) refers to as nature and nurture. One example of a learned process is effective communication.

Definitions of resilience.

There is some disagreement amongst scholars regarding the definition of resilience. In general terms, Strümpfer (2001) defines resilience as “a pattern of psychological activity which consists of a motive to be strong in the face of inordinate

demands” (p. 36). Some theorists have conceptualized resilience as an outcome (Greeff & Ven der Merwe; Rutter, 1990), while others conceptualize resilience as a process (Buzzanell, 2010; Luthar & Zigler, 1991), and still others view resilience as an individual personality trait or capacity (Garmezy, 1974). Most theorists agree that resilience implies positive adaptations in response to adversity (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Luthar & Zigler; Rutter, 1990; Werner & Smith, 1982).

Because of the differing approaches and definitions of resilience, a primary consideration is whether the researcher should treat resilience as a process, as an outcome of individual traits, or as a combination of both. Resilience research is often differentiated based on these two approaches, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. One approach considers resilience an outcome based on individual or group personality characteristic(s) or competency. The other considers resilience as a process including interactions between protective and risk factors. The distinction between the approaches to resilience is important for individual research and for the comparison and application of findings. In an analysis of the varying definitions of resilience, Laurie McCubbin (2001) calls attention to “the pressing need to clarify the relationship between resilience as a cluster of competencies and the outcome of the individual’s efforts in the face of adversity” (p. 5). Masten (2001) and McCubbin acknowledge the richness of data that varied approaches bring to the study of resilience, but Masten also calls for researchers to explicitly define and state the approach they are taking in their studies. This study hypothesizes that both individual personality traits and communication resilience processes make important contributions to resilience.

Resilience: Process or trait?

Researchers struggle to reach a consensus about the nature of resilience, in part because the approach to resilience as a personal characteristic or trait differs from resilience as a process. Additionally, concerns for the impact on others led Masten (2001) to caution against theorists and researchers defining resilience as an individual trait, in hopes of avoiding the perception that some individuals are not capable of recovering from adversity, and instead highlighting the potential for enhanced resilience.

Patterson (2002) suggests that “Most researchers view resilience as a process where there are interactions between risks and protective factors relative to a specified outcome” (p. 352). In this way, the process of resilience is based on the interrelationship of individual traits and context. Theorists in psychology (Barnard, 1994; Luthar et al, 2000) as well as in other fields such as communication (Buzzanell, 2010) have argued for a process-oriented investigation of resilience. One major advantage to a process-based approach to resilience is that results may lead to transferable processes that will enhance resilience in individuals as well as families, corporations, and other collectives in response to significant adversity (Buzzanell, 2010).

Another benefit of approaching resilience as a process is that the influence of some factors, or traits, may be dormant and, therefore, hidden until families or individuals are exposed to a higher risk situation (Patterson, 2002). Also, some scholars caution against the treatment of resilience as a static trait or state but instead, encourage researchers to consider resilience as a concept in flux because, as an outcome, resilience may change

based on context or on the focus of a particular study (Cicchetti & Garmezy, 1993; Luthar, et al, 2000). In other words, the presence of risk and protective factors is not constant, and neither is their position as either risky or protective. Rather, a factor can be a protective factor but can become a risk factor as circumstances and context change over time (Rutter, 1987). For example, strict parenting may be a protective factor for young children but may put them at higher risk for rebellion in adolescence (McCubbin, 2001). As such, resilience itself is a dynamic concept and should not be treated only as a static trait.

Additionally, individual characteristics and outcomes interact with those of the family. Patterson (2002) likens the Family Stress Model's conceptualization of resources and demands to protective and risk factors. In this model, both demands and capabilities can exist at the individual, family, and community level (Buzzanell, 2010; Patterson). Since individual characteristics, protective factors, and risk factors are all likely to influence the process of resilience, they should be considered as traits belonging to individuals as well as environmental factors.

Protective and risk factors.

Much of the research conducted on resilience as a process has been working toward identifying protective and risk factors, or main and moderating effects, which support resilience processes. Researchers have worked to identify factors that might enhance an individual's adaptation systems (protective factors), and other factors thought to impair the health of these adaptation systems (risk factors). Specifically, some protective factors include availability of economic resources (Hanson, McLanahan & E.

Thomson, 1998), health or absence of serious illness in adolescence (Werner, 1986), and similarity to other family members (Radke-Yarrows & Sherman, 1990). Also, personal characteristics identified by Wolin and Wolin (2003) as resiliencies are “insight, independence, relationships, initiative, creativity, humor, and morality” (p. 19). These resiliencies have been suggested by Wolin and Wolin as protective factors related to resilience.

However, not all protective factors are external to the individual. For example, one’s perception of a crisis and the ability to find meaning attached to a crisis can be a protective factor related to resilience (Antonovsky & Sourani, 1988; Greef & Van der Merwe, 2004; Patterson, 2002; Rutter, 1986; Walsh, 1998). Additionally, a feeling of a sense of control over one’s self and over one’s future (Rutter; Werner, 1986), and feelings of self-worth (Garvin, Kalter & Hansell, 1993) are other protective factors related to resilience.

Protective factors may occur very early in life. For example, a few examples of factors thought to enhance resilience in infants are those of being perceived as cuddly and affectionate (Radke-Yarrows & Sherman, 1990; Werner, 1986), being perceived as intellectually intelligent (Werner), and having an easy temperament (Garmezy, 1983). Finally, being the only child born within 20-24 months (Rutter, 1990; Werner) and the presence of an individual who takes a strong interest in the child (Hawley, 2000) are also factors suggested to enhance resilience in early childhood.

Risk factors related to resilience are often the absence of these protective factors. The general types of risk studied previously vary widely and have included issues such

as parental psychopathology (Masten et al., 1995), socioeconomic factors (Hanson, McLanahan & Thomson, 1998; Luthar, 1991; Rutter, 1979; Werner & Smith, 1982), health issues (Wells & Schwebel, 1987; Werner, 1986), differences between children and parents (Radke-Yarrows & Sherman, 1990), and maltreatment of children (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1997).

However, more recently, some theorists have called for a shift in focus by suggesting that:

...research on resilience must accelerate its move from a focus on description to a focus on elucidating developmental process...investigators need to focus their inquiry on understanding the mechanisms by which such protection (or vulnerability) might be conferred...the degree to which various mechanisms might mediate the effects of a given 'protective factor' (Luthar et al., 2000, p. 555).

Resulting interventions designed to enhance resilience either focus directly on a mediating variable (such as communication skills) or target one or some of the protective or risk factors to enhance those variables which seem to have a direct impact on resilience, such as parenting skills (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992; Masten, 2001). Similarly, Barnard (1994) calls for multidisciplinary research and the development of underlying factors related to resilience. Barnard encourages a multi-dimensional approach to increasing resilience, writing, "by recognizing correlates to resilience, and then encouraging the development or enhancement of as many of these as possible, we increase our helpfulness to those we work with" (p. 142).

Resilience can be examined on an individual, family, or community level, however, resilience "not only refers to important psychological skills or abilities but also to the individual's ability to use family, social and external support systems to cope

better with stress” (Friborg, Barlaug, Martinussen, Rosenvinge, & Hjemdal, 2003, p. 66). Therefore, when investigating individual resilience, researchers should also consider family and social factors that influence the resilience process. When theorists consider clusters of protective factors that moderate risk factors relative to a particular outcome, resilience is considered as both an outcome as well as a contributing factor in enhancing the underlying process.

Deficit model of resilience.

Developmental psychologists are primarily responsible for the line of resilience research that takes a person-based approach, including how individual traits contribute to recovery from stressful experiences or trauma, as well as a variable-based approach addressing how environmental and other external factors interact to enhance or decrease adaptation (Luthar et al, 2000). Early research treated resilience as a positive outcome resulting from an individual’s character traits and sought to identify what made well-adjusted individuals uniquely successful despite difficult circumstances. The study of resilience began with Garmezy (1974) who examined why some children have good social functioning despite having schizophrenic mothers (Garmezy). Other early research on resilience explored children with biological and environmental risk factors that were thought to increase the likelihood that the children would develop psychological problems (Garmezy, 1971, 1974; Murphy, & Moriarty, 1976; Rutter, 1979).

In 1979, Rutter wrote:

There is a regrettable tendency to focus gloomily on the ills of mankind and on all that can and does go wrong...the potential for prevention surely lies in

increasing our knowledge and understanding of the reasons why some children are not damaged by deprivation (as cited in Werner, 1984, p. 78).

Unfortunately, much of the original resilience research focused on the people who were experiencing troubles adapting to a severe hardship and trying to explain why this was occurring. This focus did not, however, move forward the understanding of why some people who were faced with severe hardship were adapting more appropriately than others.

Family therapist Charles Barnard also cautions against subscribing to the “damage model” (Wolin & Wolin, 1993), in which he describes this model as:

...overly attentive to all of the deficits that will be true of someone because some particular thing has or has not happened in their past. Our perceptual lenses excessively focus on deficits to the detriment of attending to individual and family strengths. (Barnard, 1994, p. 137)

Much of the interest in family resilience occurs in therapy settings where, as Hawley (2000) pointed out, “the pragmatic reality is that most family therapists practice in a deficit-minded setting...third-party payments are based on assessing weaknesses, not strengths” (p.106). Even so, also around this same time, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) urged psychologists and social science researchers to focus on “positive social science” and noted a shift from individuals as victims to persons of strength and resilience (p. 418).

Positive resilience development.

Building on the idea of a strength-focused approach as well as findings from previous studies, research expanded to investigate differences between children who adapted well to risk and those who did not adjust as well (Rutter, 1987). Researchers

focused on individuals who were in an identified high-risk group. Within these groups, researchers looked for differences between those who seemed to be adapting successfully and those who did not (Cowen, Wyman, Work & Parker, 1990; Cowen et al., 1997; Werner & Smith, 1982).

The construct of ego-resiliency, developed by Jeanne and Jack Block (Block et al., 1993), describes the focus on individual characteristics. Ego-resiliency includes a cluster of characteristics, which reflect “general resourcefulness, and sturdiness of character and flexibility of functioning in response to varying environmental circumstances” (Luthar et al, 2000, p. 546), but does not stipulate the necessary presence of adversity (Luthar, et. al., 2000). Findings from these comparison studies indicated several childhood protective factors influence resilience. As mentioned in the discussion of protective and risk factors, these characteristics may include attributes such as intellectual intelligence, insight, independence, initiative, humor, creativity, and morality (Wolin & Wolin, 1993, as cited in Hawley, 2000).

This person-based or character-traits approach supposes that an individual’s resilience is made weaker by risk factors and enhanced through protective factors such as feelings of self-worth (Garvin et al., 1993). Protective factors or resources are sometimes placed into classifications such as psychological/dispositional attributes, family support and cohesion, and external support systems (Friborg, Hjemdal, Rosenvinge & Martinussen, 2003). One skill that can impact cohesion and external support systems is that of effective communication.

Resilience and communication.

Many of the factors identified as protective factors are supported or enhanced by communication processes and influenced by issues of privacy. Communication, as a discipline, has addressed many of these constructs individually but has not explored them specifically with respect to resilience. Luthar et al. (2000) highlighted the need for investigation into “the process contributing to positive adjustment under conditions of adversity” (p. 556). Additionally, Luthar et al. (2000) called for resilience research at multiple points in the lifespan rather than just resilience in childhood, because resilience is important at many stages in life and is relevant across the lifespan (1999, as cited in Luthar et al.). Finally, Luthar et al. also called for an investigation into context-specific processes.

These calls for new approaches to resilience research can be answered, in part, by communication scholars. In the keynote address at the International Communication Association Convention, 2010, Patrice Buzzanell called for communication scholars to add to the interdisciplinary understanding of resilience. Although there are many definitions of resilience, Buzzanell used Richardson’s (2002) notion of resilience as “the process of re-integrating from disruptions in life” (p. 309). According to Buzzanell, resilience processes are enacted through communication and involve complex and multi-leveled dialogues and linguistic choices. These are observable in resilience-constructing interactions through talk and discourses (Buzzanell).

Buzzanell (2010) joined Barnard (1994), and Luthar et al. (2000) in the call for theorists to differentiate a person or an organization and their personal characteristics

from the process of resilience. By using process-oriented approaches, like the one suggested by Buzzanell (2010), theorists in psychology and communication can better provide specific strategies for individuals who are dealing with ongoing or one-time adversity.

Taking up this challenge, Buzzanell (2010) has put forth five communication processes of resilience. These are: crafting normalcy, affirming identity anchors, maintaining and using communication networks, putting alternative logics to work, and downplaying negative feelings while foregrounding positive emotions such as hopefulness and self-efficacy. Buzzanell (2010) stressed that the five processes of resilience suggested are not new to the communication field. However, the idea of considering them as the foundational processes for resilience is new. Upon close inspection, many factors identified in the psychology literature either are communication processes or are enhanced by communication processes. Therefore, communication scholars are in a position to contribute to the understanding of resilience. Additionally, some of the identified protective factors directly relate to communication competencies. Through the study of resilience, communication scholars and theorists may discover ways for the field of communication to contribute to individual well-being and resilience.

In summary, there are internal factors related to resilience and external or protective factors related to resilience. Each of these factors can either positively or negatively contribute to resilience. Because resilience is multi-dimensional, it can be conceptualized as a cluster of characteristics, as an outcome, as a process, or as all of

these, which can result in confusion when referring to each of these conceptualizations as resilience. This study will consider multiple dimensions of resilience and, therefore, will differentiate by defining each dimension separately. First, the cluster of personal characteristics will be identified as trait resilience and measured using a trait resilience instrument.

Much of the previous research has identified some personal characteristics or traits that consistently seem to influence resilience. One criticism of this approach to resilience is that it ignores the potential to enhance individual resilience beyond those factors. This study proposes that, while trait resilience may be related to resilience, it only tells part of the story. Therefore, rather than attempting to replace or refute the substantial findings on the relationship between personal characteristics and resilience, this study intends to add to the literature on resilience by exploring the additive or mediating effects of resilience processes on an individual's recovery from a crisis or disruptive life event, such as spousal bereavement. In order to account for the influence of differing levels of personal resilience characteristics of the participants, this study will include a measure of trait resilience.

Second, this study will approach the outcome of resilience as positive adaptation in the face of adversity (Luthar et al., 2000; Rutter, 1990; Werner & Smith, 1982). This study will measure this adaptation from the participants' perspective by measuring their perception of overall life satisfaction.

Finally, this study will consider resilience as a process by considering three of the communication resilience processes suggested by Buzzanell (2010). Talking about, or

disclosing, one's feelings after a spouse's death, is commonly considered important to the bereavement process. Therefore, the role of private disclosure seems particularly relevant to resilience after spousal bereavement. Considering the five communication resilience processes suggested by Buzzanell (2010), three of the processes are more directly related to CPM than the other two.

The first process this study will address is that of crafting normalcy (Buzzanell, 2010), which Buzzanell referred to as the process of getting back to a state of consistency and stability after a major crisis. CPM is particularly useful in understanding this resilience process through the application of a rule-based system for managing private information. CPM proposes that privacy is managed through the construction of metaphorical boundaries, and rules for handling private information are coordinated with others who co-own our private information (Petronio, 2002). In times of crisis, boundary turbulence occurs and the rules need to be adapted to meet the needs of the new situation. As rules are successfully adapted, smoother boundary coordination is likely to occur and bereaved individuals will return to a more normal and stable state.

The second process of maintaining and using communication networks refers to the ongoing use of social support during recovery from a trauma or crisis (Buzzanell, 2010). This process is very closely tied to CPM as relationships within communication networks are created and maintained, in part, by sharing personal information (Petronio, 2002). Additionally, to use communication networks as part of the resilience process, individuals must constantly make choices regarding appropriate topics and levels of private disclosure to others in their communication networks.

Finally, the process of downplaying negative feelings while foregrounding positive emotions is a more complex process involving two simultaneous communication behaviors (Buzzanell, 2010). An individual must acknowledge their negative feelings while also placing their positive emotions at the forefront of their communication and actions. The degree to which an individual is distressed about their problems is directly related to their need to talk about those problems (Stiles, 1987), so it is likely that disclosure will reflect the individual's process of backgrounding negative feelings and foregrounding positive emotions. At the same time, negative disclosures are not received as well as positive disclosures. CPM directly relates to this process as individuals make choices between needing to disclose and needing to preserve the boundary linkages they have co-constructed with others.

CPM fits particularly well with the three processes discussed above, offering a theoretical basis for how these communication processes contribute to the resilience process. However, two of the processes suggested by Buzzanell are less directly related to CPM. The communication resilience process suggested by Buzzanell (2010) of affirming identity anchors refers to the process of redefining one's self in relation to others after a crisis or trauma. Although private disclosure is likely to occur in presenting an identity and having a new identity confirmed, this process is not directly tied to CPM and would more appropriately be studied using other theoretical frameworks.

The final suggested communication resilience process, putting alternative logics to work, refers to how individuals and families find ways to make sense of their experiences in ways that might not seem logical to outsiders. Again, this process may

indirectly involve some aspects of privacy, such as through sharing ideas about faith and meaningfulness with others. However, other theories would be better suited as a foundation for studying how individuals reframe their current situation to find meaning. Thus, this study will focus on three of the communication resilience processes of crafting normalcy, using and maintaining communication networks, and backgrounding negative feelings while foregrounding positive emotions as they relate to privacy management. As previously mentioned, these processes are not new to communication but rather, as Buzzanell argues, these processes, already familiar and important in the communication discipline, form the basis, or overall larger construct of resilience. Buzzanell (2010) stresses that a process-based approach to resilience does not challenge previous scholarship in this area however, Buzzanell describes this approach by communication scholars as an investigation into the processes of resilience and into resilience as a purposeful “design” rather than a set of existing attributes or resources.

Privacy Management and Resilience Processes

The influence of privacy management on crafting normalcy.

Buzzanell’s and Turner’s (2003) study of families adapting to financial and relational strains of unemployment, was one of the first times that crafting normalcy emerged as a resilience process. In this study, normalcy functioned in two ways, first as an ongoing and evolving process and also as an eventual desired state, or outcome (Buzzanell & Turner). A sense of normalcy may be achieved in at least two ways. The first way is to return to recurring patterns in everyday life, and the second way is through finding new routines to construct a new normal.

Normalcy, and its role in resilience, has consistently been supported in the psychology literature where normalcy may take the form of routines and consistency. Among resilience factors for remarried families under stress, family time and routine, which related to normalcy, were two of the ten most influential factors on resilience (McCubbin, McCubbin, Thompson, Han, & Chad, 1997). In fact, both parents and children in remarried families (Greeff & du Toit, 2009) identified any activities and routines in which the family spent time together as highly important factors that helped them through stressful times.

In addition to spending time together as a family, having consistent family practices also contributes to resilience. Raoof et al. (1992) found that preadolescents were more resilient when faced with stress if they have stable family environments and consistency in discipline practices. As adolescents, the benefits of consistent practices continues as clear boundaries and rules contribute to resilience (Rouse, Longo & Trickett, 2011).

For postbereaved families, returning to a sense of normalcy is also important for these families. The death of a loved one creates disequilibrium, and returning to an old routine or reinstitution of structure in daily life facilitated the adaptation process for bereaved individuals (Muller & Thompson, 2003). One participant even explicitly stated, "...you've got to have a sense of normalcy" (Muller & Thompson, 2003, p. 197). Family rituals can be a part of crafting normalcy by either reinforcing existing patterns or helping to transition into a new state of normalcy.

Family rituals are “forms of symbolic communication and repetitive social interaction which usually require an enduring and emotional commitment” (Smit, 2011, p. 355). Previous research has suggested that family rituals can enhance resilience for children from homes of alcoholic parents (Wolin, Bennett, & Noonan, 1979). Also, rituals help children adapt after divorce and remarriage (Braithwaite, Baxter, & Harper, 1998). Findings indicate that practicing family rituals in one’s family of origin contributes to resilience (Barnard, 1994; Bennett, Wolin, Reiss, & Teitelbaum, 1987). In some cases, rituals may function to combine the previous and current state of the family. Relying on family rituals to enhance resilience can be made more difficult when the family composition has changed as a result of a crisis.

For example, when stepfamilies participate in rituals, family members experienced tension around honoring both the “old family” and the “new family” (Braithwaite et al., 1998). In families formed after the death of a parent, these tensions may be additionally complicated by taboos around talking about a deceased person (Bryant, 2003). In both cases, families may experience tension described by Braithwaite et al. regarding loyalty to a former parent and to a step-parent. Conflicting loyalties may complicate decisions about disclosure as privacy rules develop to “regulate discussing certain topics because they fear bringing up unpleasant issues or disclosing disagreeable points” (Petronio, 2002, p. 50).

Within choices individual members make about rituals are considerations of privacy concerns. According to CPM (Petronio, 2002), individuals have multiple motivations for keeping some information private and revealing other information.

These reasons include wanting to express feelings or hide feelings, to exert control, and for protection (Petronio). Previous investigations into motivations for keeping secrets resulted in six categories of motivation (Vangelisti, 1994; Vangelisti and Caughlin, 1997), one of which is to promote bonding. For example, individuals may choose privacy over disclosure if they believe that choice will promote a sense of cohesiveness or identification between family members (Vangelisti).

Factors that can enable successful rituals are bonding and identification. Bonding and identification could be an important motivation for family members either to hold on to previously existing rituals, create new rituals, or to participate in old rituals with their new family. However, bonding and identification may also influence individuals to keep some feelings about the “old” family private to show solidarity with the new family.

As individuals try to return to a normal, everyday functioning, part of that adjustment involves adapting their privacy boundaries in ways that will help them find balance again. As Olson (2000) suggested, it is appropriate for families to move to extremes of flexibility and cohesion after crisis or during times of stress. Similarly, as individual members become either more rigid, or, as is more likely, more open in their privacy disclosures during times of stress they will adapt their privacy boundaries accordingly, thus creating the need for new or different privacy rules. However, successful rituals in postbereaved stepfamilies were those that simultaneously honored the old and new family (Bryant, 2006).

CPM theory asserts that privacy rules are flexible and constantly changing (Petronio, 2002). Petronio explains that rules may be triggered to respond to new

circumstances in an individual's life such as divorce or death and in response to crisis or relational change the rules also change to accommodate and reflect the new relationship. "Changed rules may result in alterations of the way people cycle through periods of openness-closedness or represent variations on the degree of revealing-concealing" (Petronio, p. 18).

The process of crafting normalcy is partially accomplished through the adaptation of privacy rules and boundaries to accommodate turbulence during bereavement. Rules are passed along from families, organizations, and groups to new members. Rules can grow and change over time even though they also serve as a system for guiding privacy disclosures. CPM asserts that rules that are dependable and have been proven to work well for a person or group become *routinized*. When rules become routinized through repeated use they may serve as a privacy orientation (Petronio, 2002).

CPM is unique from other dialectical theories in that boundary turbulence is the central or main consideration to managing dialectical tensions (Petronio, 2002). CPM proposes that at times of stress, boundaries must be modified and new boundaries must be formed, thus affecting the dialectic of stability and change (Petronio). For these reasons as well as others that will be discussed in relation to the resilience processes later in this paper, CPM may be useful in understanding resilience through the close examination of the strategies individuals and families use to manage their private information in times of crisis and during times of recovery from crisis.

Privacy rules may become complicated when privacy boundaries become too thin or too all-encompassing involuntarily. One participant in West's (in press) study

remarked that when his spouse died, details of her death were very public because the story received media coverage and announcements were made at church, etc. Initially, the public nature of the event was understandable and the boundary around details of her death and the health of their children was very permeable and included a large part of the community. However, he said, the more time that passes, the more private that event has become. So he is now much less likely to disclose information about it to others or be willing to talk about it even with family members. Friends and family members may be included in privacy boundaries during bereavement out of necessity when the bereaved spouse needs help managing overwhelming emotions and responsibilities. Later, as the bereaved individual reestablishes a sense of normalcy, there is no longer a need to include others in day-to-day decisions. However, some friends and family find the change difficult to understand. Once individuals have been co-owners of private information, bereaved spouses reported that retracting the boundary can be a very difficult and complex process (West, in press).

Additional challenges of privacy management as proposed by CPM, such as cultural and social criteria, the challenge of creating rules for a novel situation, and managing the tension between the need to disclose and the need to establish privacy boundaries (Petronio, 2002), are especially relevant for bereaved spouses. Privacy management rules after bereavement may be complicated further by cultural and social criteria used to make privacy choices. According to CPM (Petronio), cultural and social criteria are two of the five criteria considered when developing privacy rules. Cultural criteria consider cultural norms when creating privacy rules. Also, as Petronio explains,

socialization provides the basis for our privacy rules as well as the means to negotiate when new rules are needed and what they should be. For bereaved families, there are not any good models for learning about privacy rules. In fact, the absence of good models has led some therapists to suggest that families refer to fictional accounts of bereaved families for examples (Bryant, 2003). Furthermore, the respectful privacy afforded to bereaved spouses, as called for by cultural norms, may contribute to the lack of information and good family models available for instruction in how to “do” bereavement, particularly for those who lose spouses at a young age.

Additionally, rule adaptation presents unique challenges when the situation is novel to the individual or family (Petronio, 2002), which is often the case with bereavement. Novelty presents a challenge even if the circumstance is not novel within society (e.g. divorce). The social environment including context, topic appropriateness, circumstances, and timing must all be assessed when deciding to reveal or conceal private information (Petronio). In the example of an individual who is newly bereaved, he or she may need to talk about the experience to cope with his or her emotions. Not having been widowed before, the individual also needs to establish new privacy rules to accommodate the change in his or her circumstance. These two needs, the need to disclose to cope, and the need to keep some information private to possibly avoid embarrassment, will be at odds with each other and are likely to cause boundary turbulence.

Increased disclosure may be motivated by a variety of needs such as the compulsive need to disclose, as described in the *fever model* (Stiles, 1987). According to

the fever model of self-disclosure, when individuals are feeling distress, the feeling is accompanied by a need to talk about their feelings of distress (Stiles, 1987). Stiles posited that individuals in distress apply a fever mode of disclosure wherein the psychological distress, self-understanding, and catharsis become consuming needs, and in response to these needs, individuals adapt privacy rules and open their privacy boundaries. In doing so, distressed individuals struggle to balance dealing with the distressing feelings and being able to manage privacy boundaries. When feeling distressed, individuals may greatly increase permeability in their privacy boundaries immediately during and following a crisis. However, as a part of crafting normalcy, the individual needs to reinforce the privacy boundaries once again as part of the resilience process. For example, in an exploratory study of bereaved spouses with young children, one participant described the difficulty in resurrecting privacy boundaries as she began a new routine after her husband's death, and then again when she began dating (West, in press).

The need to disclose and maintain privacy is further explained with the family circumplex model (Olson, 2000). During the mourning process, individuals may become more enmeshed with extended family through increased private disclosure and their boundaries may become more permeable. Within families, central tendencies in the dimensions of flexibility and cohesion are preferable for balanced family functioning, however, stress may change what is appropriate for family members (Olson). An extreme position within cohesion may be appropriate and facilitate family adaptation during a crisis, such as the death of a spouse. However, according to the family

circumplex model (Olson), families need to return to a less extreme state for optimal family functioning. Similarly, because individuals are likely to feel distress immediately following a crisis and experience increased levels of private disclosure during this time, a decrease in disclosure over time may also be associated with resilience.

Increased disclosure leads to more complicated boundary linkages. Boundary linkage is the process of including others in one's own privacy boundary (Petronio, 2002). In CPM, when an individual reveals private information to another, collective boundaries are formed. For bereaved individuals, collective boundaries may be formed, and expanded, to include multiple friends and family members into previously private topics, such as financial decisions and parenting decisions.

Immediately during and after a crisis, such as the death of a spouse, changes in privacy linkages and boundaries may be necessary for functionality and for managing daily activities, because the family is overtasked with demands based on the resources they have (Olson, 2000). New boundaries can create boundary turbulence. Once information is disclosed, it is then co-owned, and when information is co-owned then all parties must be part of creating the rules for regulating the boundaries (Petronio, 2002). When boundaries are co-owned, the owners perceive certain rights to the information (Petronio).

However, in seeking new balance after a crisis, it may be necessary to reconstruct or thicken some of the privacy boundaries and deny access to individuals who were previously part of the boundary. As previously mentioned, retracting access may be

difficult, and strategies may be complicated by weighing the potential cost of hurting relationships against the need for a more normal sense of privacy.

Within multiple and simultaneous boundary coordination and management processes, and adaptations to the many rule changes bereavement requires, there is bound to be either conflict of rules or misunderstanding of how those rules should be applied. Whenever there confusion about some aspect of the boundary, the process does not work smoothly. Petronio (2002) calls this disruption boundary turbulence. During bereavement, therefore, boundary turbulence is likely to increase, and the increased turbulence will create a need for further changes to privacy rules (Petronio). Turbulence occurs when there is a difference in expectations or behaviors between individuals. Usually people will change the rules to fit the particular needs of a new situation, or based on turbulence in the past (Petronio). The adaptation of rules when faced with boundary turbulence highlights the flexibility needed to continually adapt to new situations and still feel a sense of control over privacy boundaries. Within the adaptation process is a constant evaluation, or “calculus” (Petronio), of the individual needs and the requirement of the situation. Considering the complications or turbulence involved in managing multiple boundaries is a unique aspect of CPM.

Although different individuals and families may be comfortable with different levels of permeability and privacy configurations, a bereaved individual will likely benefit from rule adaptations that lead to more stability and a return to their own sense of normalcy, in terms of privacy. Thus, a bereaved individual who crafts a sense of normalcy by reestablishing a stable level of permeability and through new privacy rules

will likely experience smoother boundary coordination and fewer instances of boundary turbulence. Based on these conclusions, this study will measure the process of crafting normalcy by measuring the degree of boundary turbulence experienced by the participant. Because disclosure and boundary turbulence take place within interactions among communication networks, the next process is also greatly influenced by concerns related to privacy.

The influence of privacy management on maintaining and using communication networks.

Social support has long been recognized as an important aspect of human relationships, and support systems are particularly crucial to resilience. A communication and processes-based approach to resilience considers the role of social networks especially important. For this approach, “resilience does not reside in the individual. It is fundamentally grounded in messages, d/Discourse, and narrative” (Buzzanell, 2010, p. 2). Social support is the single most influential factor contributing to resilience in adolescents (Neill & Dias, 2001).

The previously discussed resilience process of bereavement occurs through dialogue and interaction within communication networks. “Interactions with others can be expected to affect the grieving process and adjustment on both intra- and interpersonal levels” (Stroebe & Schut, 1999, p. 202). Our identities are confirmed or denied in our interactions in our social networks, and our sense of self is constructed in face-to-face social interactions (Goffman, 1959). Furthermore, our social interactions are essential to the adaptation of life as a widow(er) because “without a social scene in

which to enact an identity, and without having some degree of validation of that identity in those scenes...the force of that identity is communally empty, or without social life” (Carbaugh, 1996, p. 24).

Therefore, communication within a social network is a necessary element for individuals to adapt to their new identity, disclose during distress, and then renegotiate privacy boundaries. In addition to helping individuals construct and reshape their identities, communication networks provide key components in the resilience process in the form of an audience for storytelling, which enhances emotional and physical health (Pennebaker, 1997; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986).

In McCubbin and Patterson’s (1983) investigation of resilience in divorced families, one of the key family resources enhancing resilience was social support available to the family as a whole. A strong social network (Garmezy, 1983), as well as other support networks including extended family (Greeff & Van der Merwe, 2004), and friends contributes to family resilience (Rouse et al., 2000).

Also contributing to family resilience are community resources like relationships with friends and family as well as those in formal organizations (Hanson, et al., 1998). In addition, integration with the community contributes to resilience in remarried families (Greeff & du Toit, 2009). For children in remarried families, affirming, caring, and supportive communication of friends supported resilience, as did acquiring, and accepting outside social support (Greeff & du Toit).

In addition to external social support, support within the family contributes to overall family resilience (Greeff & Van der Merwe, 2004; Hanson et al, 1998;

McCubbin and Patterson, 1983). Specifically, emotional support between family members and consistent contact with support networks, including family, enhances resilience (Rouse et al., 2000), as does social support combined with family solidarity (Garvin, et. al, 1993). Furthermore, the closeness of relationships within the family is an important factor for families in or after crisis (Hawley, 2000; Mederer, 1999).

Maintaining communication networks and, more specifically, relationships within those networks is partially accomplished through self-disclosure, sometimes of private information. Altman and Taylor (1973) hypothesize that interpersonal closeness develops through increasingly intimate levels of self-disclosure. Baxter (2011) highlights the importance of the “interplay of competing discourses” (p. 169), such as privacy and disclosure, in relationships. Also, uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) proposes that self-disclosure and shared communication networks help to decrease uncertainty as part of relational development.

The processes of maintaining and using communication networks are influenced by privacy processes. A social network or social support decreases distress after bereavement (Vachon et al., 1982). However, simply the notion of using a communication network implies individuals must reach out to the available networks in times of need and make their needs public. Reaching out to particular networks necessarily involves some private disclosure.

According to the fever model of self-disclosure, when individuals are feeling distress, the feeling is accompanied by a compulsion to talk about their feelings of distress (Stiles, 1987). According to this model, the degree to which people disclose

information is directly influenced by their level of distress. CPM proposes wanting to express or hide feelings, desire for control and for protection are all reasons for disclosing (Petronio, 2002). It would seem likely that all of these may increase during crisis and thus increase levels of private disclosure. Thus, individuals are more likely to disclose private information more freely within their communication networks during times of stress or crisis (Stiles)

Although therapists and clinicians have operated under the assumption that disclosure is a necessary part of the bereavement process (Kubler-Ross, 1970), there is disagreement about the connection between disclosure and adjustment (Stroebe, Schut & Stroebe, 2005). Disclosure and telling one's narrative are linked to better emotional and physical health (Pennebaker, 1997; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986), and painful disclosures of grief have long been thought necessary to healthy bereavement processes (Kuebler-Ross; Parkes, 1996). However, some findings do not support the benefits of disclosure for resilience after bereavement (Stroebe, Schut, & Stroebe, 2006). Rather, bereaved individuals expressing a high level of positive emotions rather than negative emotions while "working through" their feelings of loss are less likely to report feelings of distress (Stroebe et al., 2006). Additionally, expressions of positive emotions are associated with lower levels of distress (Bonanno & Keltner, 1997).

These findings bring to light an interesting paradox. When deciding whether to disclose or protect private information, individuals must consider the social appropriateness and relational risks involved in disclosing (Petronio, 2002). As previously mentioned, factors such as self-presentation or avoiding topics that may make

others uncomfortable may influence the disclosure process when maintaining and using communication networks. Additionally, performing the widow or widower role in socially appropriate ways is associated with lower levels of distress (Vachon et al., 1982). If a bereaved spouse discloses unexpected positive emotions, the disclosure may be deemed inappropriate within the individual's social network and presents a either/or choice between the benefits associated with disclosing private feelings to members of one's communication network against the potential of being viewed negatively or socially inappropriate and experiencing increased distress.

Although individuals differ in the level of disclosure to their social support network that they find to be appropriate, as well as what topics are appropriate to disclose, having an effective network of friends and family is critical to resilience. Social support is consistently identified as an important environmental factor that can enhance resilience. Findings on social support and resilience are somewhat limited, however, by the fact that this research has primarily focused only on the presence of this resource. Measuring the extent to which people use their boundary linkages with social network members, and the existence of linkages that allow disclosure when desired, may give us more insight into this resilience process.

Based on these conclusions, the resilience process of using and maintaining communication networks will be assessed by measuring the number of supportive individuals participants identify in their social networks as well as individuals to whom the feel they can disclose, and how frequently they make use of these linkages to others

in their social network. The content of bereaved individuals' disclosures may also influence resilience.

The influence of privacy management on backgrounding negative feelings while foregrounding positive emotions.

Similar to Stroebe et al. (2006), Buzzanell recognizes the value of focusing on positive emotions. In fact, Buzzanell (2010) posits two simultaneous processes as resilience factors: backgrounding negative feelings and foregrounding positive emotions. The notion of managing two dimensions of grief aligns with some previous approaches to bereavement. For instance, the dual process model of coping with bereavement (Stroebe & Schut, 1999) proposes that as individuals cope with loss, they oscillate between attention to loss-oriented feelings and tasks, and restoration-oriented ones. Loss-oriented tasks are defined as “the concentration on, and dealing with processing of some aspect of the loss experience itself, most particularly, with respect to the deceased person” (Stroebe & Schut, p. 212).

Restoration-orientated tasks include learning new skills, constructing a new identity, and other tasks associated with dealing with the life changes that are a result of the death of a loved one (Stroebe & Schut, 1999). Dutton and Zisook (2005) propose a similar view, writing, “successful adaptation is marked, not by the absence of negative feelings, but by an individual’s ability to manage the ‘ebb-and-flow’ of distress and to focus on positive emotions” (p. 882). The ability to focus on positive aspects of one’s life is evidence of successful adaptation to bereavement (Dutton & Zisook). These propositions call for the observation of two separate variables.

The first is the backgrounding of negative feelings. Buzzanell (2010) describes backgrounding as, “a conscious decision to acknowledge that one has the legitimate right to feel anger or loss in certain ways but that these feelings are counterproductive to more important goals” (p. 9). Part of this resilience process is to acknowledge negative feelings such as anger, but to focus on positive feelings and goals (Buzzanell).

In the cycles of grief, individuals spend part of their time focused on aspects of loss. During these times, individuals must make choices about how to deal with their anger and other negative feelings. The difference between a healthy or destructive approach to dealing with these feelings can be difficult to separate. For example, individuals may ruminate on negative feelings, described as “think(ing) repeatedly and passively about their negative emotions, focusing on their symptoms of distress” (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2000, p. 504). Rumination predicts higher levels of depression (Nolen-Hoeksema, McBride, & Larson, 1997). Foundational models of grief suggest that a more positive behavior for dealing with negative feelings is to confront and work through negative emotions (Kubler-Ross, 1970; Parkes, 1996). Rumination suggests a passive approach to negative feelings while working through indicates action on the part of the bereaved individual. The process of backgrounding negative feelings suggests an active alternative by proposing a shift in emphasis from the negative to the positive.

Frequency of the disclosure of distressful feelings is likely to reflect how much individuals are concerned with their negative feelings. In one study, distress disclosure predicted higher levels of psychological adjustment (Kahn & Hessling, 2001), however, there are a variety of reasons that distressed individuals may choose to keep distressing

feelings private. Negative feelings may be kept private to keep from harming a relationship (Vangelisti, 1994) or because an individual desires to control another's impressions (Omarzu, 2000). Also individuals may sometimes feel that negative feelings are not socially appropriate or do not expect a supportive response for these negative feelings so they keep these feelings private (Vangelisti, 1994). Finally, individuals may choose not to disclose negative feelings because there is more risk associated with sharing negative information (Petronio, 1982).

There are other advantages to distress disclosure as well. Motivational criteria may encourage private disclosure such as psychological benefits (Doster & Nesbitt, 1979 as cited in Petronio, 2002), desire for catharsis (Afifi & Steuber, 2009), and positive health benefits (Pennebaker, Mayne & Francis, 1997) associated with disclosure. Petronio also proposes seeking self-knowledge through disclosure, and self-defense as factors that may motivate one to disclose.

As previously discussed in relation to disclosing to social networks and constructing privacy boundaries, individuals have varying levels of boundary permeability and differing ideas about what to disclose and how much to disclose. Bereaved individuals have motivations to keep their positive and negative thoughts and feelings protected and motivations to share them as well. However, when individuals are focused on negative feelings and problems, they are likely to want to express them to someone else (Stiles, 1987). The ability to background negative feelings will likely result in a lower level of disclosure about problems and negative feelings to others.

Thus, this study will measure an individual's disclosure of distressful feelings as a measure of the backgrounding of negative feelings.

Beyond considering the ramifications of expressing negative feelings, focus on positive feelings and actions contributes to balance and overall functioning, which is likely to enhance resilience. Findings indicate that resilience is enhanced through a sense of purpose and goals for the future (Goertzel & Goertzel, 1962; Radke-Yarrow & Sherman, 1990; Rutter, 1985), as well as the commitment to finding purpose in life (Kobasa, Maddi, & Kahn, 1982; McCubbin et al. 1997). The ability to focus on positive aspects of one's life is evidence of successful adaptation to bereavement (Dutton & Zisook, 2005).

One hypothesis of the family circumplex model is that members of balanced families will have more positive communication skills than unbalanced families (Olson, 2000). Additionally, positive communication is linked to relational qualities because it results in more balanced systems (Olson, 2000). Finally, higher cohesion & adaptability between individual members, which may be influenced by family privacy processes, indicate a balanced system, resulting in higher levels of overall family functioning (Kellas, 2005).

Focus on positive feelings has a beneficial influence on physical health as well. Individuals who used positive-emotion words, such as "love" and "happy" when telling the story of a traumatic experience showed more positive physical health when compared to individuals who did not incorporate positive words into their story (Pennebaker et al., 1997). Additionally, in the Pennebaker et al. study, participants who

used negative-emotion words in moderation when telling a story experienced improved physical health compared to participants who used either very many or very few negative-emotion words. These positive-focused behaviors are associated with the concept of hope and hopefulness.

The second part of this resilience process is the foregrounding of positive emotions such as hopefulness and self-efficacy (Buzzanell, 2010). Buzzanell describes this, in part, as a focus on hope saying:

I firmly believe that the engagement in this kind of emotion work and the reframing of the situation linguistically and metaphorically to one of constrained hopefulness is yet another key process in the communicative construction of resilience (Buzzanell, p. 9).

Hopefulness, specifically, is an important factor in managing stress life events. As Ong, Edwards, and Bergeman (2006) explain, “Few things more poignantly reveal our remarkable capacity for resilience as our ability to sustain hope in the face of vulnerability, pain, and loss” (p. 1263). Hope is more than simply an emotion, it is:

a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful agency (goal-directed determination) and pathways (planning of ways to meet goals) (Horton & Wallander, 2001, p. 383).

Hopefulness is consistently linked to resilience in the literature and related to both goal-setting and planning to meet goals. Hope has been found to be a key element in resilience in caregivers (Horton & Wallander, 2001), and in bereaved older adults (Ong et al., 2006), and for better quality of life (Wu, 2011). Higher levels of hope are associated with having a larger number of goals, and a perception of confidence in achieving goals (Snyder, 2002). Hope is positively associated with better physical health, better psychological adjustment (Snyder), and has demonstrated positive

correlation with academic goal setting and achievement (Snyder; Snyder et al., 1996). Hope provides the fuel for individuals to “rebuild their lives, revive their dreams and renew their attachments” (Wu, p. 1906).

An individual’s disposition of being hopeful is a stable characteristic (Snyder 1994). Snyder (2002) predicts that individuals with high levels of hope will rebound from distressing situations. Dispositional hope reflects an individual’s ability to cope with difficulty circumstances or crisis. Feelings of daily hopefulness are referred to as state hope and reflect a “temporal state that is related to the ongoing events in people’s lives” (Snyder et al., 1996, p. 322). State hope is more sensitive to particular situations than dispositional hope (Snyder et al.).

Because this final resilience process involves the simultaneous management of negative disclosure while focusing on positive feelings such as hopefulness, this study will also measure state hopefulness at the time of data collection. Thus, for the purpose of this study, participants’ state of hopefulness will be measured using the state hope scale (Snyder, et al., 1996) and by prompting participants to consider their feelings of hopefulness in their current situation. This study will investigate the influence of trait resilience, boundary turbulence, social support, distress disclosure, and hope on life satisfaction.

Life satisfaction

As previously mentioned, the death of one’s spouse is often considered the most stressful life event one will encounter (Holmes & Rahe, 1967; Norris & Murrell, 1990). Bereavement is associated with a variety of negative mental and physical outcomes.

Bereaved spouses are at an increased risk for depression (Bruce, 1990; Zisook, 1993; Zisook & Shuchter, 1991) and widows are more likely to suffer from anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (Onrust & Cuijpers, 2006). Bereavement is also a time of great changes to self-concept (Montpetit & Bergeman, & Bisconti, 2010) and identity (Shapiro, 1994). Also, in previous research widowed spouses have reported a decrease in morale and wellbeing (Bennet, 1997). According to the deficit model for partner loss (Stroebe, Stroebe, Abakoumkin, & Schut, 1996) bereaved spouses are likely to experience a deficit in instrumental support, emotional support, validation support and social contact support as a result of losing their closest personal relationship. In previous research bereaved spouses reported a decline in life satisfaction (Chipperfield & Havens, 2001). Because of the stress and loss associated with the loss of a spouse, loss of support, and loss of a close personal relationships, bereaved spouses are likely to experience decreased life satisfaction, therefore this study will use the Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) to assess perceived well-being of the participants.

Rationale

This study sought to determine how privacy management relates to a bereaved individual's perception of life satisfaction and well-being. Based on the findings in the literature, this study set out to test two conceptual models to explore the relationships between resilience traits, three resilience processes, privacy, and overall life satisfaction. To reflect the relationships in each model, the researcher proposed two sets of hypothesis.

Independent role of trait resilience

Bereaved spouses who report higher levels of trait resilience likely will be more satisfied with their lives. Many researchers conceptualize resilience as a positive adaptation to adversity (Luthar et al., 2000; Rutter, 1990; Werner & Smith, 1982). Higher levels of resilience are associated with better psychosocial outcomes (Werner, 1990), and resilience helps individuals adjust after experiencing a tragedy (Gredrickson et al., 2003). Positive adaption to adversity, better psychosocial outcomes, and better adjustment appear closely related to life satisfaction.

However, the communication processes identified by Buzzanell (2010) are specific behaviors not identified as resilience traits. Because all of these communication behaviors have been linked to life satisfaction, they also may contribute to life satisfaction, independent from trait resilience. A sense of control is associated with life satisfaction (Palmore & Luikart, 1972; Ruthig, Chipperfield, Perry, Newall, & Swift, 2007; Stewart, 2005). Hopefulness has been associated with fewer negative emotions and less stress (Horton & Wallander, 2001) and in previous research hope has predicted life satisfaction (Bailey, Eng, Frisch, & Snyder, 2007). Social support predicts life satisfaction (Fife, Adegoke, McCoy, & Brewer, 2011) and results in lower levels of distress after bereavement (Vachon et al., 1982). Finally, talking about one's problems is thought to be necessary to adjustment after the death of a spouse (Kubler-Ross, 1970; Worden, 1990). Therefore, the first set of hypotheses based on Model 1 (see Figure 1) conceptualizes a direct relationship between trait resilience, communication resilience

processes and well-being, in which each works in tandem and independently contributes to well-being. Thus the researcher proposed the following set of hypotheses:

H1: Trait resilience predicts higher levels of life satisfaction.

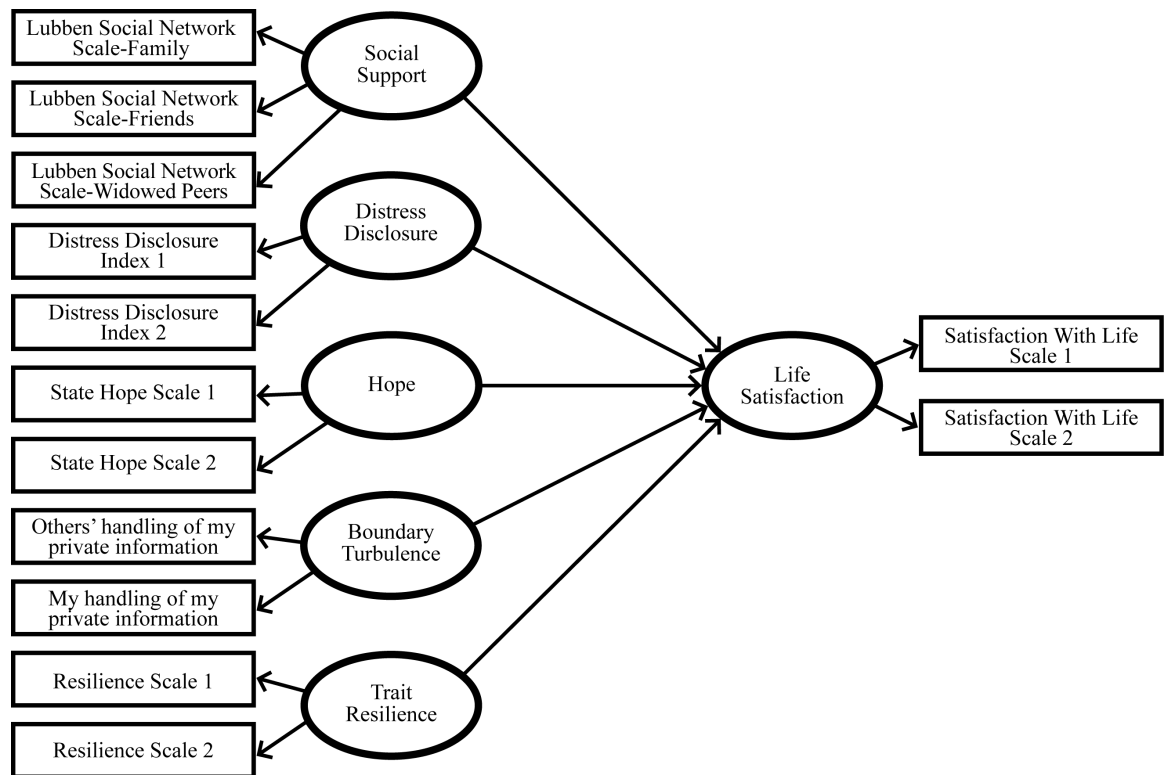
H2: State hopefulness while minimizing disclosure when feeling distressed predicts higher levels of life satisfaction.

H3: Use of social networks predicts higher levels of life satisfaction.

H4: Lower instances of privacy boundary turbulence predict higher levels of life satisfaction.

Figure 1

Hypothesized Model 1, Direct Model



Another possibility is that resilience traits enhance an individual's ability to engage in the communication resilience process. Review of the resilience literature identifies several personal characteristics that contribute to resilience, such as feelings of self-worth (Garvin et al., 1993), intellectual intelligence (Werner, 1986), and flexibility in suppressing and expressing emotions (Bonanno, Papa, Lalande, Westphal & Coifman, 2004). It is logical to hypothesize that individuals who exhibit personal characteristics identified in the resilience literature as protective factors will be more skilled at the communication resilience processes.

Levels of resilience may predict the use of the resilience processes. Previous research has demonstrated that resilience and hope are closely related (Cohn et al., 2009; Walsh, 1996). Also, when individuals are feeling distressed, they are driven to find someone to talk to about their distress (Stiles, 1987). So it would seem probable that resilient individuals will express feelings of hope and talk to others when feeling distressed. Also, a perceived sense of control has been identified as a protective factor contributing to resilience (Rutter, 1986; Werner, 1986). Therefore, resilient individuals are probably better at exerting control over their own private information. Finally, resilient individuals are able to use their support systems effectively to cope with stress (Friborg, Barlaug, Martinussen, Rosenvinge, & Hjemdal, 2003) so more resilient individuals will probably be those who are making use of their social support networks. Thus, the second set of hypotheses, based on the second model (see Figure 2), conceptualizes a mediated relationship between trait resilience and a life satisfaction in which the communication resilience processes mediate trait resilience. Therefore, the following set of hypotheses is proposed:

H5: Trait resilience predicts higher levels of state hopefulness and lower levels of disclosure when feeling distressed.

H6: Trait resilience predicts greater use of social networks.

H7: Trait resilience predicts fewer occurrences of privacy boundary turbulence.

H8: Higher levels of state hopefulness and lower levels of disclosure when feeling distressed predicts higher levels of life satisfaction.

H9: Using and maintaining social networks predicts higher levels of life satisfaction

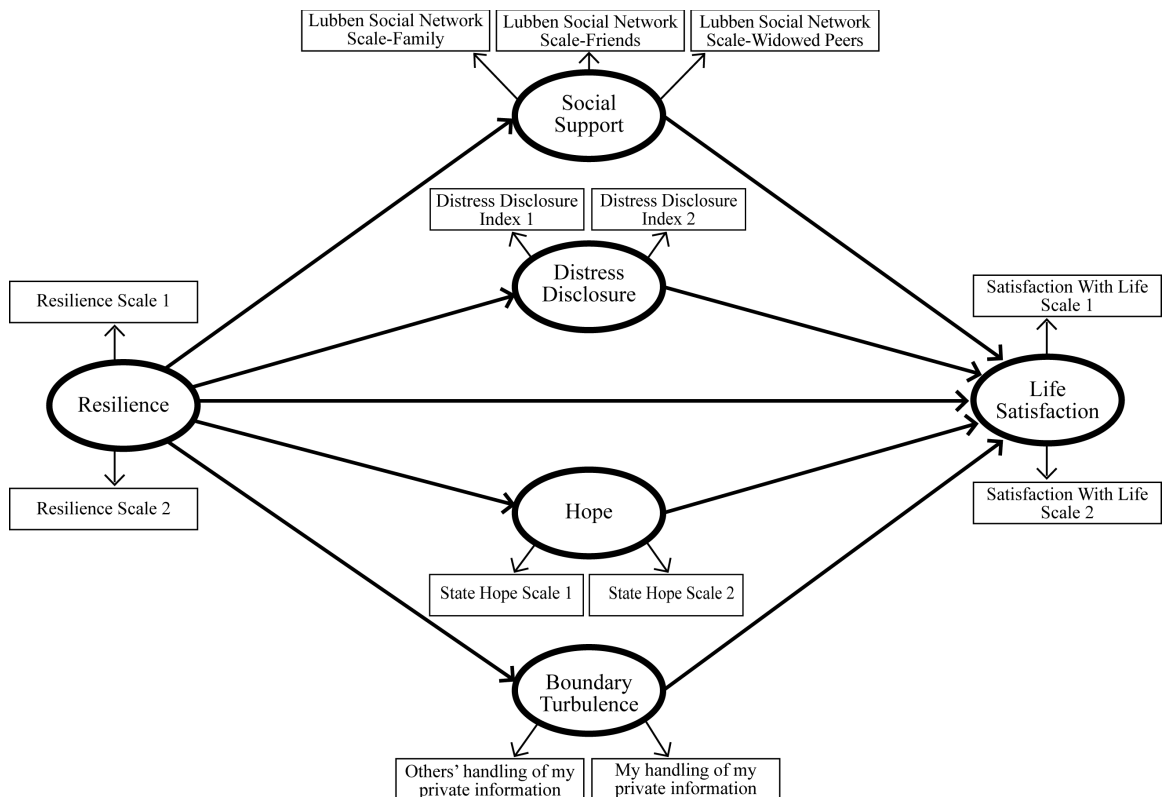
H10: Fewer instances of privacy boundary turbulence predict higher levels of life satisfaction.

H11: Trait resilience predicts higher levels of life satisfaction.

H12: The relationship between trait resilience and life satisfaction is mediated by instances of privacy boundary turbulence, state hopefulness, disclosure when distressed, and use of social support.

Figure 2

Hypothesized Model 2, Mediated Model



This study compares the two proposed models to determine which better reflects the relationship between trait resilience, communication resilience processes, and an individual's life satisfaction. Thus the following research question is proposed:

RQ1: Does a direct or mediated model better represent the relationship between trait resilience, state hopefulness, disclosure when feeling distressed, using social networks, instances of privacy boundary turbulence, and life satisfaction.

Chapter Two: Method

Survey research is useful when seeking to describe, explore or explain phenomena or to evaluate attitudes and orientations in a representative sample of a population too large to directly observe (Babbie, 2010). Usually, when conducting survey research, an individual is the unit of analysis. In this study, survey data collection is appropriate for this study because there was a short window for data collection with this group of participants. Data collection is cross-sectional and was collected through self-administered questionnaires.

Participants

Participants in this study consist of a convenience sample of widows and widowers attending Camp Widow, which is an annual weekend-long seminar for widows and widowers from across the United States and Canada. The camp was held in San Diego, August 12-14, 2011. Participants were single, engaged or remarried. The average age of the participants was 46.24 years. The average age at time of bereavement reported was 43.71 years. The average amount of time that had passed since the death of their spouse was 2.83 years, and the average time participants reported being married was 17.7 years. Acute illness was the most common cause of spouses' deaths (45.2%), followed by accident (22.2%), chronic illness (20%), other (8.1%) and violence (4.5%). The percentage of participants who reported having children at the time of their spouse's

death was 83.67%. Only 6% of participants were remarried at the time of the study. The average annual income reported by participants was \$67,689. Finally, 93% of participants identified as white, 2.3% as Black or African American, 2.2% as Asian, and 2.9% identified with another race or ethnicity. Finally, 142 participants were female, and 7 were male.

The director of Camp Widow, Michele Neff Hernandez, was initially contacted through the website for the camp, and after several phone and email conversations, she agreed to allow the researcher to collect data during the camp. Michele was able to review and give feedback on the proposed survey questions as well as the data collection location. Michelle is also the founder of Soaring Spirits Loss Foundation (sslf.org), which is the sponsoring organization for Camp Widow. Data collection took place during registration times, between sessions, and at the farewell breakfast for the camp. The researcher was positioned at a table in the registration area and at the breakfast, and multiple announcements were made during camp events to encourage participation.

Approval was obtained through the researcher's Institutional Review Board. At the data collection site, prior to participation in this study, information was provided about the purpose of this research study and also what types of questions appeared on the questionnaires. Each individual was allowed to ask any questions they had about the study. Before administering the surveys, all participants were made aware of the risks, procedures, and benefits of participation and asked to sign an informed consent in accordance with Internal Review Board policy. After the purpose of the study was explained, individuals were then asked if they would like to participate. Next,

participants who agreed to participate were given the questionnaires and asked to respond to all questions and return the questionnaires to the researcher. Participants were entered into a drawing for American Express gift cards after they completed a survey. Five one hundred dollar gift cards were given away at the banquet during the last night of the camp, and a drawing for an additional six \$100 gifts cards was held immediately following conclusion of the camp.

Instruments

Trait resilience.

Trait resilience was measured using the Resilience Scale (RS; Wagnild & Young, 1993; Niell & Dias, 2001). The original scale consisted of 25 items, which was modified by Neill and Dias based on face validity and factor loadings to a revised 15-item questionnaire. The revised scale was used for the current study. Items in this instrument include statements such as, “I am determined,” “I have self-discipline,” and “My life has meaning.” Respondents were asked to choose the number representing their level of agreement with the statements, and responses were measured on a Likert scale from 1 to 7, with 1 representing “agree” and 7 representing “disagree” (see Appendix A for full questionnaire). Wagnild and Young (1993) demonstrated concurrent validity indicated by significant correlations between scores on the RS and other measures of morale, life satisfaction and depression. An exploratory factor analysis performed by Neill and Dias indicated the RS is a unidimensional measure of resilience. The scale was reliable ($\alpha = .91$) in the present study.

Distress Disclosure Index (DDI).

The 12-item Distress Disclosure Index (DDI; Kahn & Hessling, 2001) uses a 5-point Likert-type scale to measure the tendency of an individual to conceal versus disclose psychological distress. The DDI is a single-dimension scale. Items such as “I prefer not to talk about my problems” were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). For this study the items were modified to include the phrase “about the death of my spouse” to make it more specific to this sample. See appendix B for full version of the questionnaire.

In previous studies, the DDI demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha=.94$) and test-retest reliability good was ($\alpha=.80$) over 2-month period (Kahn & Hessling, 2001) and also demonstrated convergent validity reporting positive correlation with self-disclosure ($r = .43, p<.001$), and perception of social support using Social Provisions Scale (SPS) (Cutrona & Russell, 1987). In the present study, the DDI also demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .91$).

The State Hope Scale (SHS).

The State Hope Scale (Snyder, et al., 1996) was used to measure participants’ foregrounding of positive feelings and the framing of the participants’ current situation as one of hopefulness (Buzzanell, 2010). The SHS was adapted from the Dispositional Hope Scale to reflect a focus on present state of feeling hopeful rather than on the overall trait of hopefulness. The scale also has two subscales, which are *agency* and *pathways*. The directions ask respondents to “take a few moments to focus on yourself and what is going on in your life at this moment. Once you have this ‘here and now’ set,

go ahead and answer each item according to the following scale” (Snyder, et al, p. 335).

The 6-item questionnaire included questions such as “At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my goals” and “Right now I see myself as being pretty successful.” Response choices range from 1 to 8 with 1 representing “Definitely false” and 8 representing “Definitely true.” See Appendix C for the full version of the instrument.

In previous studies, the SHS demonstrated acceptable levels of internal reliability ($\alpha = .93$) and showed variability when given at multiple points in time to the same participants. In previous studies, when tested at two points in time, the SHS demonstrated high correlation with dispositional hope ($r = .79$ and $.78, p < .001$), and moderate correlations with state self-esteem ($r = .68$ and $.75, p < .001$), and state positive affect ($r = .65$ and $.55, p < .001$) (Snyder et al, 1996). The SHS demonstrated good reliability in the current study ($\alpha = .89$).

Lubben Social Network Scale (LSNS).

A modified version of the original 6-item Lubben Social Network Scale (LSNN-6; Lubben et. al, 2006) was used to measure the availability and use of social support networks. The first three items ask, “How many relatives do you see or hear from at least once a month?”; “How many relatives do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?”; and “How many relatives do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?” The next three questions are worded identically to the first three but replace “family members” with “friends.” Participants’ response choices range from 0 to 5 with 5 representing “nine or more.” The original six questions were used in this

study and three additional questions were added. The final and newly added three questions have similar wording to the first two sets of questions but “family members” and “friends” are replaced with “widow/widower peers” at the suggestion of the camp director.

Scores for the original LSNS range from 0 to 30 with scores lower than 12 indicating social isolation. In previous studies, the LSNS-6 demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.83$) across multiple data collection sites (Lubben et al., 2006). Also, in previous studies, the LSNS-6 as well as both the family and friend subscales demonstrated convergent validity with other measures of social integration (Lubben et al.). See Appendix D for the full instrument. The range of possible scores for the modified LSNS is 0 to 45. Reliability for the current modified version of the LSNS scale was acceptable ($\alpha = .78$) in the present study.

Boundary Turbulence Scale (BTS).

The boundary turbulence scale is a 12-item scale created for this study to measure the frequency with which individuals experience boundary turbulence. Items were constructed based on Petronio’s (2002) six types of boundary turbulence. Two items were constructed for each type of boundary turbulence (intentional rule violations, boundary rule mistakes, fuzzy boundaries, dissimilar boundary orientations, boundary definition predicaments, and privacy dilemmas). Response options were Likert-type with 5 representing “Very Frequently” and 1 representing “Never.” See Appendix E for the full instrument.

The 12 items of the BTS were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis using a principal component extraction method and a Promax rotation using SPSS Version 19. Prior to performing PCA, the data were assessed to ensure that the data set was appropriate for factor analysis. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed that all items demonstrated adequate to good correlation with other items, with the exception of the final two items. These items reflected privacy dilemmas related to other people's private information. These two items, "I struggle deciding about sharing other's private information" and "I know too much private information about others" demonstrated relatively low correlations to the other items ($r = .37$ and $r = .34$ respectively) in the scale. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .86, which exceeds the recommended threshold of .7 (Meyers, et al, 2006) for sampling adequacy, and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity achieved statistical significance ($p < .001$), indicating the correlations levels were suitable for PCA.

Using the Kaiser-Guttman retention criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0, principal components analysis revealed the presence of three components. Factor 1: Others' handling of my private information (eigenvalue = 5.20) accounted for 43.4% of the variance and had 6 items; Factor 2: My handling of my private information (eigenvalue = 1.15) accounted for 9.58% of the variance and had 4 items; Factor 3: Handling of others' private information (eigenvalue = 1.07) accounted for 8.92% of the variance and had 2 items. The items that loaded on the third factor were also the two items that demonstrated low correlation to the other items in the instrument. Also, the third factor had low correlations with the first two factors ($r = .336$ and $r = .318$). Because of

the low correlation of the two items and their corresponding component, and because these two items were the only items that loaded on the third component, the final two questions were eliminated from the scale. Meyers et al, (2006) suggests only retaining components with at least four variables that are highly correlated to the factor. Table 1 presents the 12 items, their pattern and structure coefficients, and their communality estimates.

The two-component solution explained a total of 60.18% of the variance, with Component 1 contributing 49.43% and Component 2 contributing 10.75%. To assist in the interpretation of the two components, a Promax oblique rotation was used, because this rotation allows the components to be correlated (Meyers et al., 2006). Both components show a number of strong loadings and all variables loaded substantially on only one component. The two components reported moderate correlation ($r=.61$). The revised BTS demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .88$).

Table 1

Pattern and Structure Matrix for PCA with Promax Rotation of Two Factor Solution of BTS Items

Item	Pattern coefficients		Structure coefficients		Communalities
	Component 1	Component 2	Component 1	Component 2	
Worry PI repeated	.951	-.251	.799	.326	.678
Others accidentally share my PI	.924	-.156	.829	.404	.703
Different ideas of privacy	.736	.133	.817	.580	.679
Others decide when to share my PI	.635	.004	.638	.389	.407
Unsure if others know to keep PI private	.580	.312	.769	.664	.653
Others are discussing my PI	.542	.280	.712	.608	.556
I make others feel uncomfortable when revealing PI	-.216	.879	.317	.748	.589
I overshare in public places	-.112	.744	.340	.676	.465
I share too much or too little	.163	.701	.588	.800	.656
Too many people have access to my PI	.363	.521	.679	.742	.633

Note: major loadings for each item are bolded.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS).

The SWLS was used to measure a global sense of well-being and adjustment.

The SWLS has correlated adequately with interviewer estimates of life satisfaction and with several other measures of well-being (Andrews and Withey, 1976; Campbell,

Converse and Rodgers', 1976; Diener, Emmons, Larse, & Griffin, 1985). In previous studies the SWLS demonstrated high correlation ($r = .81, p < .05$) with the Life Satisfaction Index (LSI-A) as well as daily satisfaction ($r = .51, p < .05$) and with peer evaluations as well such as peer SWLS ($r = .54$). Items include questions such as, "I am satisfied with my life", and "So far I have gotten the important things I want in life." See Appendix F for a full version of the instrument. The SWLS demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .85$) in the present sample.

Chapter Three: Results

To address the first four hypotheses, the hypothesized Direct Effect model, labeled Model 1, (see Figure 1) was assessed using AMOS version 19 to test structural equation models using maximum likelihood estimation (ML). First, data were screened for outliers and extreme collinearity. Next, tests were run and normality of outcome variables was confirmed to meet the assumptions of maximum likelihood estimation (See Table 2). Scores were not standardized because ML assumes unstandardized variables (Kline, 2011).

Table 2

Correlation Matrix

	Resilience	Life Satisfaction	Distress Disclosure (reversed)	Boundary Turbulence	Hope	Social Support
Resilience	1.0	--	--	--	--	--
Life Satisfaction	.656**	1.0	--	--	--	--
Distress Disclosure (rev)	-.193*	-.066	1.0	--	--	--
Boundary Turbulence	-.366**	-.320**	.130	1.0	--	--
Hope	.712**	.666**	.212*	-.280**	1.0	--

Social Support	.178*	.184*	-.376**	-.119	.269**	1.0
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* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Next, missing cases were analyzed to determine if there was a pattern to the missing items. This step was taken because there were missing responses on some surveys. Missing items violate one assumption of ML, that there be no missing values in the data file (Kline, 2011). In the data file, there were ten cases missing one or more response to scale items, however, descriptive reports demonstrated no individual scales were missing more than 3% of responses (See Table 3). Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) suggest that missing responses present in 5% or fewer of cases can be ignored. The likely effects of the missing data were further investigated by coding cases with any missing responses, and then comparing the means on other scales those cases to cases that had no missing responses. The comparison was done using independent samples T-test comparing the mean scores for resilience, distress disclosure, hope, social support, boundary turbulence, and life satisfaction. The comparisons between groups were not found to be statistically significant (See Table 3). Results indicate the data are missing at random (MAR) for all of the independent variables. Therefore, because the missing responses accounted for less than 3% of the cases on any one scale, and since the missing items seem to be random, cases with missing responses were retained for modeling. To account for missing values in the data, means and intercepts were estimated in AMOS so that all cases could be used in the evaluation of the models (Kline).

Table 3

Variable Summary Table

	Missing* (one scale)	M-missing**	M-Complete	Total M	SD	T	P
Resilience	2.7%	73.60	77.97	77.82	12.27	-.78	.44
Life Satisfaction	0%	19.78	20.04	20.02	7.09	-.11	.92
Distress Disclosure	2.0%	44.17	40.76	40.90	10.45	.78	.44
Boundary Turbulence	1.4%	20.86	26.89	28.60	7.83	-2.01	.05
Hope	0.7%	33.50	32.67	32.71	8.70	.26	.79
Social Support	0%	25.67	23.36	23.50	7.01	.96	.34

* Cases with missing items on each particular scale

** Means for cases missing responses on a scale other than the one being reported

Mediated relationships were investigated using the bootstrap method (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Five hundred samples were generated from the data set to test the size and significance of the indirect effect. A significant indirect effect indicates mediation of the independent variable on the dependent variable, through mediators.

Model 1 represents the hypothesized relationships described in H1-H4 as direct paths from each of the independent variables (resilience, boundary turbulence, hope, distress disclosure, and social support) to the dependent variable, life satisfaction (see

Figure 1). The hypothesized Direct Effect model was evaluated by four fit measures: (a) the chi-square, (b) the normed fit index (NFI), (c) the comparative fit index (CFI), and (d) the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). In addition, the path coefficients were assessed for statistical significance at $p < .05$.

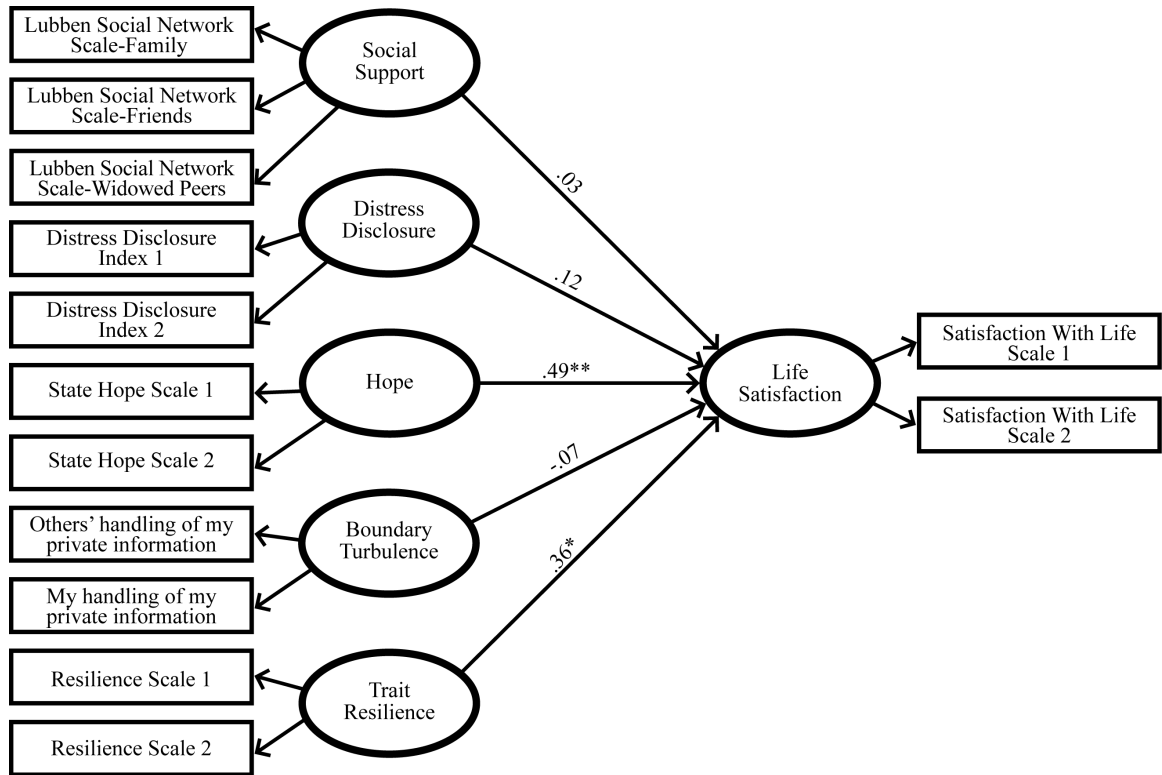
Results of all four fit indexes support the proposed model. The chi-square had a value of 66.07 (50, $N = 149$), $\chi^2/df = 1.32$, $p = .06$, indicating an acceptable match between the proposed model and the observed data. The CFI and NFI are measures of relative fit comparing the hypothesized model with the null model with acceptable values of .95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Both the CFI and NFI yielded values of .982 and .932 respectively, indicating good fit of the model. The RMSEA measures the discrepancy between the sample coefficients and the population coefficients with values closer to zero indicative of a well-fitting model. The RMSEA was .047 indicating a good fit (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006). Next, each of the paths in Model 1 was tested for statistical significance at $p < .05$. All of the independent variables were allowed to be correlated with each other. Individual paths were tested for significance to address the relationships described in the first four hypotheses.

All three models are recursive and the solution converged without modification. For each model, the two boundary turbulence subscales were used as indicators of a latent variable of boundary turbulence. The three social support subscales of family, friends, and peers were used as indicators of the latent variable social support. The remaining scales were split so that half of the items for each scale formed one of two

indicators (Cook, 1993; Morr Serewicz, 2008) for the latent variables of resilience, hope, distress disclosure, and life satisfaction.

Figure 3

Model 1, Direct Model



Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

H1 predicted that trait resilience would influence life satisfaction. The model supports the first hypothesis because the direct path from resilience to life satisfaction achieved significance. As resilience increases 1 standard deviation, the expected increase in life satisfaction is .8 standard deviations (See Table 4 for regression coefficients for all models).

H2 predicted that state hopefulness minimizing disclosure when distressed predicts higher levels of life satisfaction. These two variables were measured using separate instruments and are represented with separate paths in the model. The state hope scale (SHS) and the reversed distress disclosure index (DDI) reported low

correlation ($r = .21, p < .05$), suggesting they represent two distinct constructs (see Table 2). Thus, H2 was tested in two parts. Of these two variables, hope and distress disclosure, only hope achieved a significant relationship with life satisfaction with a beta value of .49, $p < .05$.

H3 predicted the use of social networks predicts higher levels of life satisfaction. Social support did not achieve a significant relationship with life satisfaction. Thus, this hypothesis is not supported by Model 1.

H4 predicted that fewer incidents of privacy boundary turbulence predict higher levels of life satisfaction. Boundary turbulence did not achieve a significant relationship with life satisfaction. Thus, this hypothesis is not supported by Model 1.

Table 4

Summary table of regression coefficients

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Resilience → Hope		.81**	.83**
Resilience → Distress Disclosure		-.25*	-.25*
Resilience → Boundary Turbulence		-.43**	-.44**
Resilience → Social Support		--	--
Resilience → Life Satisfaction	.36*	.36*	.68* (indirect)
Boundary Turbulence → Life Satisfaction	--	--	-.15*
Hope → Life Satisfaction	.49**	.49**	.78**
Distress Disclosure → Life Satisfaction	--	--	--
Social Support → Life Satisfaction	--	--	--

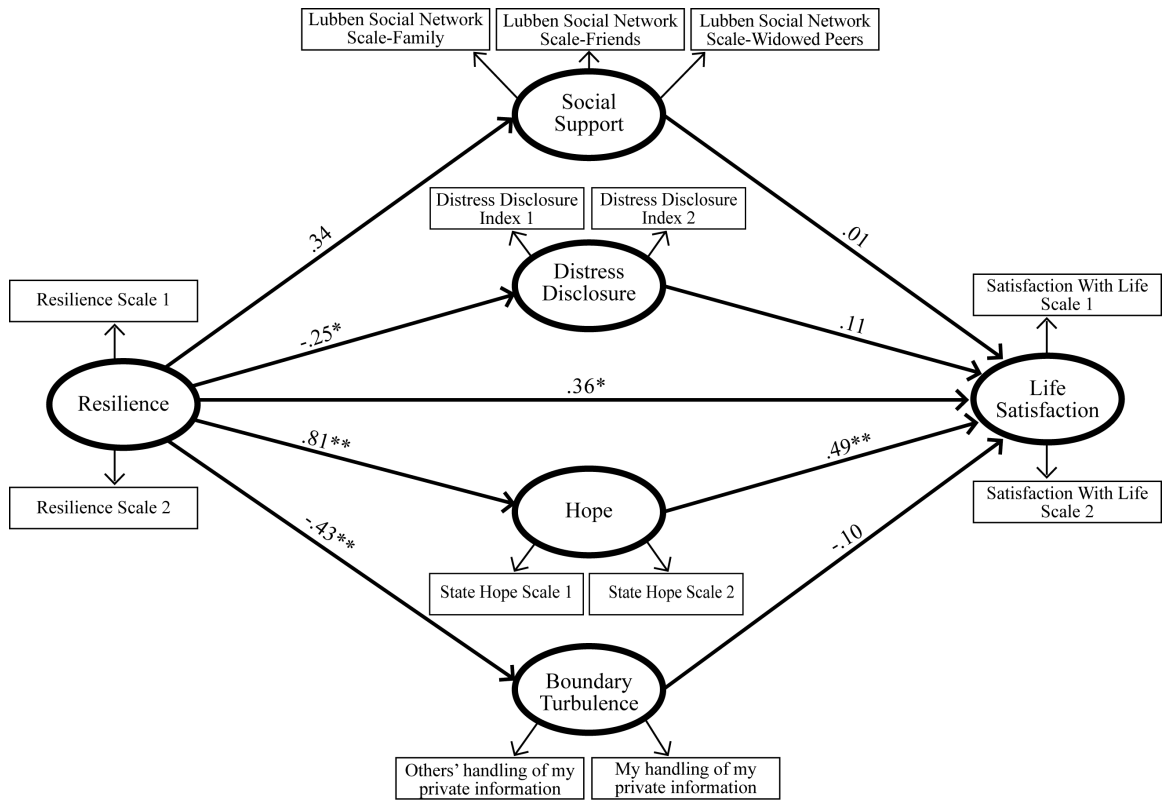
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, -- non-significant

Model 2 retains the same variables from Model 1, but hypothesized a mediated and direct relationship between trait resilience and life satisfaction, with the resilience processes as mediators as hypothesized in H5-H10 (see Figure 2). Model 2 represents the hypothesized mediated relationships with direct paths from trait resilience to life satisfaction as well as to each of the four resilience processes (boundary turbulence, hope, distress disclosure, and social support), and from each of the resilience processes to life satisfaction. The hypothesized model was evaluated by the same four fit measures as Model 1, and the model fit between Model 1 and Model 2 were compared using the chi-square difference test. Finally, the path coefficients were assessed for statistical significance at $p < .05$.

The chi-square was significant, $\chi^2 (56, N = 149) = 89.5, \chi^2/df = 1.60, p < .01$, however, the results yielded acceptably high goodness-of-fit indices, supporting the fit of the model to the observed data. The CFI and NFI yielded good indexes of .962 and .908 respectively. The RMSEA reported a value of .064, indicating acceptable model fit (Meyers et al., 2006.) Because Model 1 is nested with Model 2, a chi-square difference test was performed to compare the fit of the two models. The result of the chi-square difference test was significant ($\Delta\chi^2 = 26.38, \Delta df = 6, p < .001$), indicating that Model 2 is a statistically significantly better fit to the data than is Model 1.

Figure 4

Model 2, Mediated Model



Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

In Model 2, H5 predicted that trait resilience would predict higher levels of state hopefulness while limiting disclosure when distressed. Resilience achieved a significant relationship with state hope and with distress disclosure. The state hope scale recorded a higher beta value ($\beta = .81, p < .05$) than the distress disclosure scale ($\beta = -.25, p < .05$). Model 2 supports H5.

H6 predicted that trait resilience will increase the resilience process of using and maintaining social networks. However, the trait resilience scale failed to achieve a significant relationship with the social support scale. H6 is not supported by this model.

H7 hypothesized that trait resilience would affect the frequency of boundary turbulence reported. Trait resilience did achieve a statistically significant relationship with the boundary turbulence scale, recording a beta weight of .43 ($p < .05$). Thus, H7 is supported by Model 2.

H8 hypothesized higher levels of state hopefulness combined with lower reports of disclosure when feeling distressed predicted higher levels of life satisfaction. The path from hope to life satisfaction was significant, recording a beta weight of .49 ($p < .05$) but distress disclosure did not achieve a significant relationship with life satisfaction. H8 is only partially supported.

H9 hypothesized that the resilience process of using and maintaining social networks would predict higher levels of life satisfaction. However, the path from social support to life satisfaction was not significant in Model 2. H9 is not supported in this model.

H10 hypothesized that minimizing instances of boundary turbulence would predict higher levels of life satisfaction. Boundary turbulence did not achieve a significant relationship with the life satisfaction scale. Thus, H10 is not supported in Model 2.

H11 hypothesized that trait resilience would predict higher levels of life satisfaction. The path from trait resilience to life satisfaction was significant in Model 2. H11 is supported.

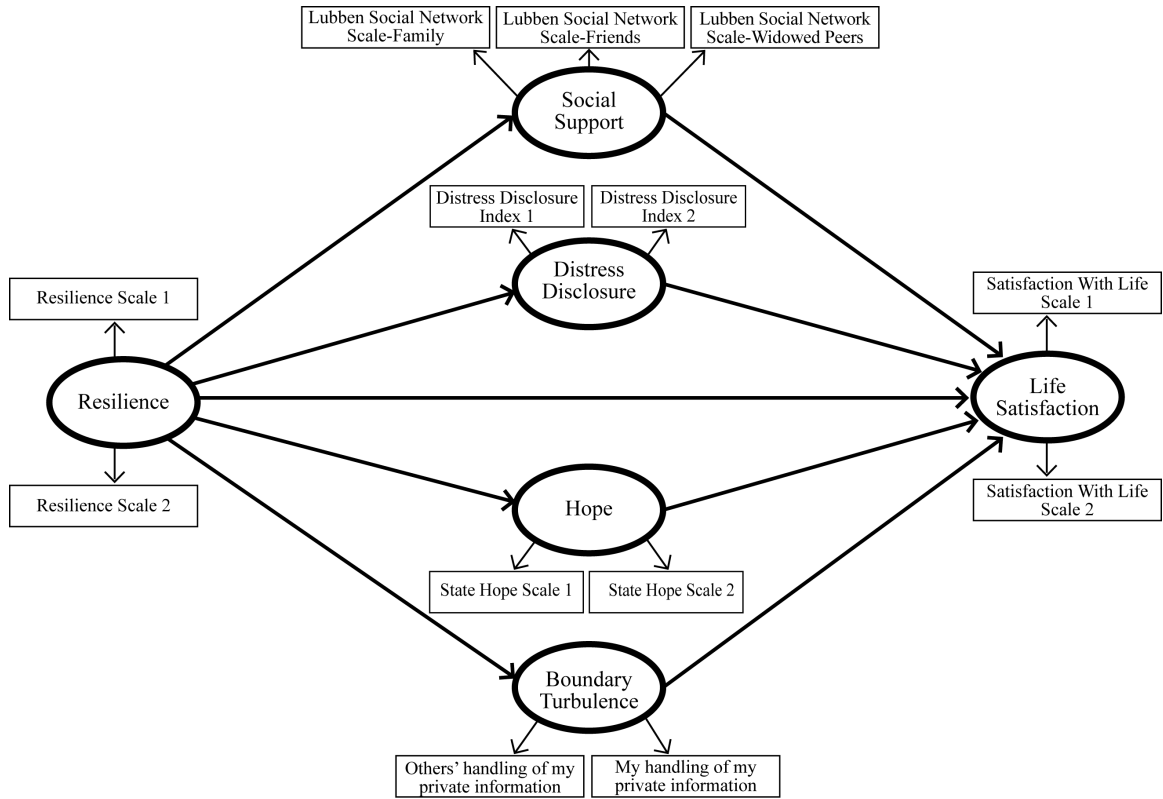
H12 hypothesized that the relationship between trait resilience and life satisfaction would be mediated by boundary turbulence, hope, distress disclosure, and

social support. Examination of the bootstrap data revealed a significant indirect effect of trait resilience on life satisfaction ($p < .05$). The ratio of the indirect effect to the total effect was calculated to determine the proportion of the total effect that is mediated ($P_M=.64$). H12 is supported.

Although Model 2 was a significantly better fit to the data Model 1, many of the paths failed to achieve significance, so the direct path from resilience to life satisfaction was removed to create Model 3 (see Figure 5). Model 3 hypothesized only an indirect relationship of trait resilience to life satisfaction, with the resilience processes as mediators.

Figure 5

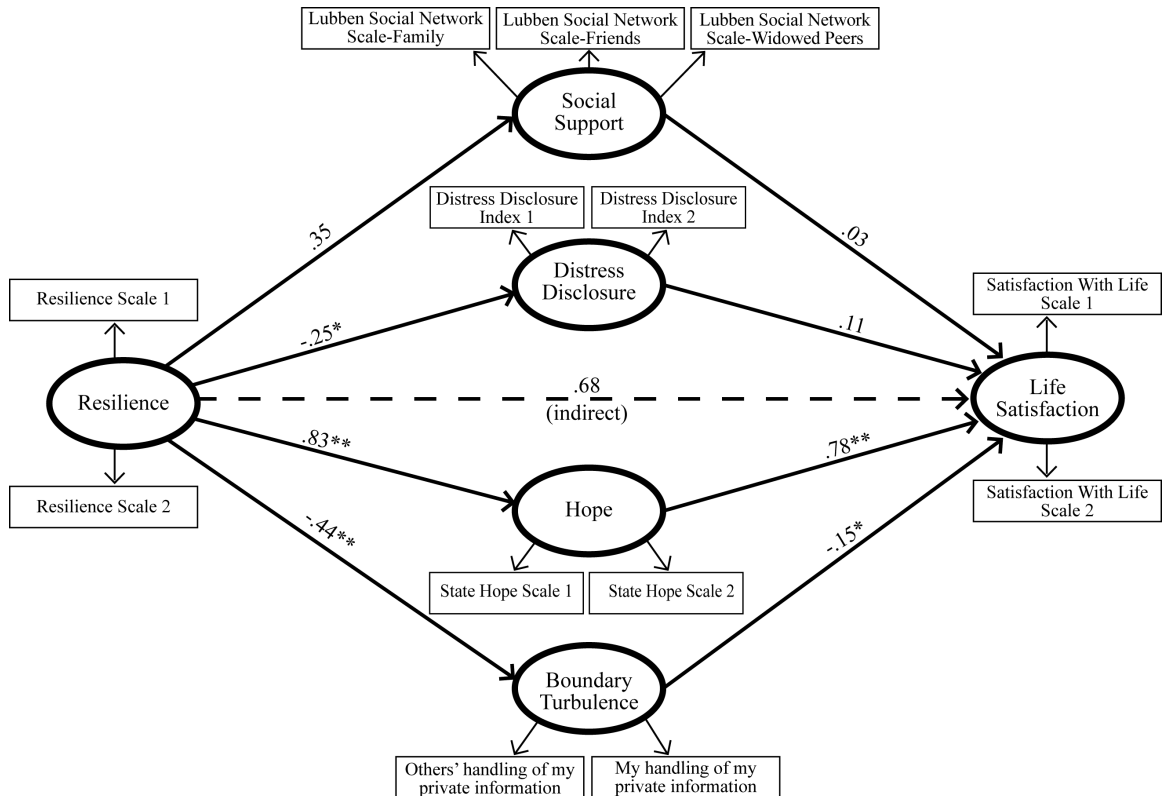
Hypothesized Model 3, Indirect Mediated Model



When this model was tested the chi-square was significant χ^2 (57, N = 149) = 96.5, $\chi^2/df = 1.69$, $p < .01$, however the results of the goodness of fit indices yielded acceptably high goodness-of-fit results, supporting the fit of the model to the data. The CFI and NFI yielded good indexes of .957 and .902 respectively. The RMSEA reported a value of .068, indicating acceptable model fit (Meyers et al., 2006.) Model 3 is nested within Model 2 so a chi-square difference test was used to compare fit of the two models. The chi-square difference test was significant, ($\Delta\chi^2 = 5.75$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .05$) indicating that Model 3 has statistically significantly better fit than Model 2.

Figure 6

Model 3, Indirect Mediated Model



Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

The modification to this model yielded significant paths from trait resilience to hope ($\beta = .832, p < .001$), to distress disclosure ($\beta = .25, p < .05$), and to boundary turbulence ($\beta = -.44$). Also the state hope scale and boundary turbulence scale achieved a significant relationship with life satisfaction with state hope recording a higher beta value ($\beta = .83, p < .001$) than the boundary turbulence scale ($\beta = -.147, p < .05$). ($\beta = .436, p < .001$). The paths from social support and from distress disclosure to life satisfaction were not significant. Additionally, the bootstrap test revealed a significant

indirect path from resilience to life satisfaction indicating a significant mediating effect of resilience ($\beta = .678, p < .05$).

RQ1 asked if a direct or mediated model better represent the relationship between trait resilience, state hopefulness, disclosure when feeling distressed, using social networks, instances of privacy boundary turbulence, and life satisfaction. All three models achieved acceptable fit to the data, however, the mediated model (Model 2) was a significantly better fit than the direct model (Model 1). Furthermore, removing the direct path from resilience to life satisfaction improved the fit of the mediated model significantly. Therefore, Model 3, the model that reflected only a mediated relationship between trait resilience and life satisfaction was the best representation in this sample.

Chapter Four: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the possible relationships among resilience traits, resilience processes, privacy, and overall life satisfaction. This study considered three processes that Buzzanell (2010) hypothesized serve to construct resilience. The three processes considered in this study were crafting normalcy, foregrounding positive feelings such as hopefulness while backgrounding negative emotions, and using and maintaining support networks. These processes have been individually related to life satisfaction (Cohn, Fredrickson, Brown, Mikels, & Conway, 2009; Lueng & Lueng, 1992; Muehrer & Becker, 2005; Parker, Martin, & Marsh, 2008), but not considered as a cluster of processes related to resilience and life satisfaction. Additionally, previous research has demonstrated a positive relationship between trait resilience and measures of life satisfaction (Cohn et al., 2009; Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh, & Larkin, 2003; Rossi, Bisconti, & Bergeman, 2007). Finally, the role of privacy within these processes, and in relation to life satisfaction, has not previously been considered.

Generalizability

When considering the findings in this study, it is important to note some particular characteristics of the participants. First, 95% of the participants were female, and the average age of the participants was only 46.24 years. This sample is much younger than most widows, as more than 75% of widows are over the age of 65 (US

Census Bureau, 2010). Also, 92.6% of the participants were white and all participants self-selected both to attend a camp for widows and also to take the surveys for this study. Therefore, the demographic and sex composition of the sample along with the participants' desire to participate in a group camp are significant factors to be considered when interpreting the results of this study.

Findings in the current study generally support a significant mediated relationship between trait resilience and life satisfaction, however, some findings were unexpected and call for further investigation. Two models were initially proposed, and a third was added during the data analysis process. The first model tested direct relationships from resilience traits, resilience processes, and privacy, to life satisfaction. The second model tested communication processes, and privacy, as mediators of the relationship between resilience traits and life satisfaction. Based on modification indices in AMOS and theoretical support, a third model was tested and was the best fit to the data. The third model eliminated the direct relationship between resilience and life satisfaction, and tested only a mediated relationship between these two variables. In the mediated model (Model 3), the resilience processes, represented by measures of hope and boundary turbulence, mediated the relationship between trait resilience and life satisfaction. Tests of the mediated model revealed that resilience traits had a direct, significant influence on hope, distress disclosure, and boundary turbulence, and an indirect influence on life satisfaction. As proposed, communication privacy management demonstrated influence on life satisfaction as measured by occurrences of boundary turbulence.

These findings add to our understanding of resilience and serve to demonstrate the role of communication in resilience and life satisfaction. First, while trait resilience did influence life satisfaction in this study, its influence was mediated through the process of managing private information, and through maintaining a state of hopefulness. A higher score on the measure of resilience traits related to participants' increased use of the coping processes of disclosing to others when feeling distressed, of successfully managing boundary turbulence, and of maintaining a sense of hopefulness related to their current situation. The results support earlier suggestions that resilient bereaved spouses may make better choices regarding strategies for dealing with stressful situations (Rossi et al, 2007). Although, previously, resilience has been conceptualized as an interaction between individual traits and context (Patterson, 2002), these results also demonstrate the important role communication strategies play in resilience, and ultimately in life satisfaction. Findings in this study suggest that the processes through which resilience is constructed using communication need also to be considered as an essential factor in the discussion of resilience.

The results of the current study would seem to suggest that enhancement of processes like boundary turbulence can enhance life satisfaction. This process, as well as distress disclosure and use of social networks, are all concerned with issues addressed by CPM. Privacy practices are interwoven throughout these resilience processes. This study is the first to consider multiple factors related to CPM in an attempt to develop a more complete picture of how communication can enhance recovery from or adaptation after traumatic events, such as the death of a spouse. The results from this study provide

evidence of the importance of privacy management practices and CPM to life satisfaction.

Although CPM does not make any predictions about the benefits or outcomes of managing boundary turbulence, results of this study highlight the significant influence that privacy management has on individual's psychological well-being and life satisfaction. These results also demonstrate how communication scholars can be instrumental in introducing skills training and interventions for bereaved individuals as well as individuals in other types of crisis, and enhance life satisfaction above and beyond levels resulting from external and internal personal and environmental factors related to resilience.

Contrary to the proposed models, social support resulted in no significant relationships either with trait resilience or with life satisfaction, and distress disclosure did not have a significant relationship with life satisfaction. Further investigation is necessary to explore the role of social networks and distress disclosure in the resilience process of bereaved individuals, and these variables are discussed later in this chapter.

Trait Resilience and Life Satisfaction

Previous studies have demonstrated that trait resilience, individual factors of resilience and life satisfaction are interrelated. As a whole, resilience has been linked to positive life outcomes. Higher levels of resilience result in better developmental and psychosocial outcomes (Werner, 1990) and resilience was shown to be a mediator between the influence of positive emotions and life satisfaction (Cohn et al., 2009). Resilience is related to better interpersonal and intrapersonal adaptive ability (Klohen,

1996), and positively influences psychological adjustment after tragedy (Fredrickson et al., 2003).

Trait resilience refers to personal characteristics that enhance an individual's ability to deal with adversity. Werner (1990) considers resilience as an outcome resulting from the interaction between an individual and his or her environment and identified several internal protective factors or traits that enhanced an individual's ability to overcome adversity. Werner identified several personal characteristics, such as intelligence, impulse control, ability to find meaning in situations, and positive self-concept, as protective factors for individuals facing crisis. Individually, several of these factors have demonstrated a positive relationship to life satisfaction. For example, an individual's ability to find meaning in a difficult situation predicts life satisfaction (Leung & Leung, 1992). Furthermore, an individual's belief in an internal locus of control has been positively associated with life satisfaction (Palmore & Luikart, 1972), and self-concept has been positively correlated to life satisfaction (Lueng & Lueng, 1992; Parker et al., 2008). In fact, in their review of the literature, Leung and Leung concluded, "Among all the variables investigated, self-concept is the single variable that has been found consistently correlated with life satisfaction" (Leung & Leung, 1992, p. 654). Based on previous research, in this study, these types of internal protective factors or personality characteristics were conceptualized as trait resilience.

Findings in this study support the prediction that individuals with resilient traits will experience greater life satisfaction after bereavement. However, this relationship is mediated by an individual's ability to limit instances of boundary turbulence and by a

state of hopefulness. This mediated relationship suggests further investigation of a process-based approach to resilience could produce interventions and additional communication strategies that will directly enhance life satisfaction by assisting individuals to enact resilience processes, regardless of their level of trait resilience. These findings provide evidence that resilience traits facilitate the use of some adaptive resilience processes and improve life satisfaction through implementation and use of resilience processes. To truly thrive, individuals need to draw upon all available types of resources (Gordon & Coscarelli, 1996), and communication scholars can directly influence life satisfaction by increasing the resources available to individuals.

Although only two of the processes achieved statistical significance as mediating variables for the relationship between resilience and life satisfaction, some significant individual paths encourage further investigation into these processes and warrant further discussion here. As predicted, in this study, individuals who reported higher levels of resilience were more likely to report higher levels of hopefulness when considering their current situation, fewer instances of difficulty related to privacy boundaries, and were more likely to talk to others when they experienced feelings of distress. Furthermore, levels of hopefulness and successful coordination of privacy boundaries demonstrated a direct relationship to reports of life satisfaction.

Individual Communication Processes

In this study, resilience demonstrated a positive relationship with hope and negative relationships with distress disclosure and boundary turbulence. These findings support a process-based approach to resilience. However, results for social support run

contrary to predictions, since there was no significant relationship for resilience with social support.

Resilience and hope.

The close relationship between resilience and hope is consistent with the literature on these two variables. In previous research, the influence of positive emotions on life satisfaction was mediated by resilience (Cohn et al, 2009). Also, previous findings indicate that a state of hopefulness results in fewer negative emotions, lower levels of stress, and plays a significant role in emotional recovery (Horton & Wallander, 2001; Ong et al., 2006). Walsh (1996) characterized a realistic sense of hope and optimism as a fundamental aspect of resilience. In this study, trait resilience and hope were highly correlated ($r = .67, p < .001$) with a path coefficient of .83 ($p < .001$).

In addition to a historical relationship between hope and resilience, some of the correlation may be attributed to the similarity of concepts measured by the State Hope Scale (SHS) and the Resilience Scale (RS). For example, the RS asks participants to rate their level of agreement with the statement, “When I am in a difficult situation I can usually find my way out of it” and the SHS asks participants to rate the truth of the statement “If I should find myself in a jam, I could think of many ways to get out of it.” So, although the scales are measuring unique concepts, they are highly correlated with each other, possibly because a few of the items are similar.

Similarly, a few of the items on the SHS could be interpreted the same as an item on the life satisfaction measure (SWLS). For example, the SHS asks participants to rate the truthfulness of the statement, “Right now I see myself as being pretty successful” and

the SWLS asks the level of agreement with the statement “So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.” It is not unexpected then, that trait resilience and hope show the largest influence on life satisfaction and were the only two factors with significant relationships to life satisfaction in all three models (See Table 4).

Distress disclosure.

In the current study, distress disclosure demonstrated a significant relationship with trait resilience. The distress disclosure scale was reversed, meaning a higher score reflected a lower level of disclosure of distressing feelings about a spouse’s death. Therefore, the negative relationship of trait resilience with distress disclosure indicates that as trait resilience increases, so does distress disclosure. This finding indicates that more resilient individuals tend to talk to others about distressing feelings and seems to support theorists who have suggested that grieving individuals should work through and express their painful feelings related to loss (Kubler-Ross, 1970; Worden, 1991).

The inverse relationship between resilience traits and distress disclosure supports a process-based approach to resilience and indicates that distress disclosure may play an important role in bereavement, but whether or not the individual benefits from the disclosure remains unclear. Contrary to predictions, distress disclosure did not significantly influence life satisfaction. This finding runs contrary to theorists who have challenged the need for expressing negative emotions as a necessary step in the bereavement process (Bonanno et al., 1995). Perhaps disclosure is driven by the overwhelming compulsion to disclose, as indicated in the fever model (Stiles, 1987). Individuals with more resilient traits are able to determine when they need to disclose,

and then find way to do so, but the disclosure is not gratifying. This finding was unexpected but is similar to one other study that found that having a confidant related positively to life satisfaction in men, but not in women (Palmore & Luikart, 1972). The participants in the current study were almost all female and therefore, gender may have influenced this surprising result.

It would be hasty to draw conclusions about the role of distress disclosure in bereavement and life satisfaction from these limited data. The measure of distress disclosure (DDI; Kahn & Hessling, 2001) only measured whether individuals reported seeking someone to talk to when they experienced distressing feelings, but not the valence or frequency of disclosures. The valence of disclosures may influence the relationship between disclosure and life satisfaction, similar to Bonanno et al.'s (1995) finding that positive emotions decreased distress and disruption in bereaved individuals. More specific research on valence and frequency of disclosures is needed. Perhaps if individuals are able to remain hopeful, disclosures may eventually result in more life satisfaction as time passes.

The effect of disclosing when distressed may change over time. For example, the family circumplex model, (Olson, 2000), indicates that well-balanced families “have the resources and skills to shift their system in an appropriate way to cope more effectively with a crisis” (p. 155). The circumplex model also proposes that family members become more enmeshed during crisis and then return to a more balanced state as time passes. Perhaps the increased disclosure may initially help members through a crisis, but, as time passes, distress disclosure may prevent the return to the previously balanced

state. More research is needed to investigate the influence that time since the death of a spouse has on the relationship between disclosure and life satisfaction.

Finally, findings regarding distress disclosure and life satisfaction may be quite different in a different sample. The participants in this study were attending a weekend-long retreat based on their widowed status, and their desire to connect with peers and talk about their experiences as widow(er)s. This environment, as well as the participants' self-selection to attend such an event, may have resulted in a sample that is more likely to want to disclose, regardless of their levels of life satisfaction. More research into the different variables that may affect disclosure and life satisfaction should be done before meaningful conclusions and suggestions can be made.

Boundary turbulence.

The Boundary Turbulence Scale was constructed for the purpose of this study. Questions were based on CPM's (Petronio, 2002) five types of boundary turbulence. Analysis revealed items from one category (boundary dilemmas) did not correlate well with the other categories, and these were eliminated for model evaluation. Items from this category (*I struggle with the decision about sharing someone else's private information*, and *I know private information about others that I would rather not know*), relate to the managing of another person's private information. This suggests that issues related to an individual's own private information is a different construct than the issues related to the privacy of another person. This calls for further investigation to differentiate between strategies and perceptions of one's own private information and that of others.

Considering issues related to one's own private information, higher reports of resilience traits were associated with fewer instances of boundary turbulence. This finding supports theories of privacy, disclosure, and family functioning. Boundary turbulence seems more likely to occur after the death of a spouse because, as proposed by CPM (Petronio, 2002), the management of private information is based on rules and boundaries and "an unpredictable situation, a change in our lives that is unplanned, or a novel event may trigger a new rule or modification in our existing privacy rules" (p. 80). Also, changes in privacy rules are triggered in response to a crisis or relational change (Petronio). Based on these predictions, bereaved spouses are likely to deal with rule changes and associated difficulties of coordinating multiple privacy boundaries. When new rules need to be coordinated with others, boundary turbulence can occur.

Yet another reason that boundary turbulence is likely to occur after the death of a spouse is explained by the fever model of distress (Stiles, 1987). The fever model (Stiles) hypothesizes that when individuals feel distress, they are driven by an overwhelming need to disclose their private feelings of distress. The combination of distress disclosure and boundary turbulence findings give further support to CPM's prediction for triggered rules and a fever model of disclosure.

The changes in privacy rules also fit with the proposed stages of the family circumplex model (FCM; Olson, 2000). The FCM hypothesizes that families will initially become deeply and *chaotically enmeshed* during and immediately following a crisis, such as the death of a spouse or parent, because they are trying to stabilize the chaos. The family is brought significantly closer together because of the chaos and the

resulting altering of their daily routines, and they become *enmeshed* emotionally. Then, as time passes, they become *rigidly enmeshed*, which can be uncomfortable as members begin to move through the crisis. Despite the chaos and openness that may dictate the disclosure of private information during crisis, extreme positions of cohesion or flexibility are only appropriate as a temporary state (Olson). Finally, members shift back to a balanced state once again as new routines create more rigidity and cohesion. As the system finds balance, it is a *new balance* (Olson).

A balanced state may signify a return to a more normal state of functioning and disclosing. Reducing boundary turbulence and adapting to new privacy rules is one way that bereaved spouses can return to a sense of normalcy in their lives. Normalcy is reported to enable bereaved individuals as they adapt to the death of a loved one (Muller & Thompson, 2003). Effective instatement of new rules and clear communication of the rules to others may be characterized by reduced boundary turbulence. Therefore, it seems logical that individuals who are better skilled at the communication process of boundary coordination will experience fewer instances of boundary turbulence. The Boundary Turbulence Scale was developed for this study to measure the frequency with which different types of boundary turbulence occur. The questions relating to the sharing of an individual's private information were significantly influenced by the trait resilience. In other words, individuals who scored as more resilient experienced fewer instances of boundary turbulence.

This particular element of CPM is important to bereaved spouses because the results of this study also report that boundary turbulence was negatively related to life

satisfaction. In other words, individuals who were more competent at managing their private information, rules, and boundaries reported experiencing higher levels of life satisfaction. This finding supports the assertion of Bonanno et al. (2004) that individuals who are flexible in deciding which emotions to disclose are better able to adapt to the death of a loved one.

Social support.

In this study, social support did not have a significant relationship with resilience traits or with life satisfaction. This finding was surprising because a positive and significant relationship was expected. Previous research has demonstrated that social support was the single most influential factor for resilience in adolescents (Neill and Dias, 2001), and social networks are key contributing factors for family resilience (Garmezy, 1983; Greef & Van der Merwe, 2004; Hanson et al, 1998; Rouse et al., 2000). Additionally, findings indicate that social support is particularly important in reducing distress after bereavement (Vachon et al., 1982). However, in this study, social support did not have a significant relationship with either trait resilience or life satisfaction.

A few factors may have contributed to this surprising finding. First, the population for this study consists of a group of widows or widowers who were attending a “camp” or conference with other widowed individuals. The participants’ attendance at Camp Widow is evidence of their ability to seek out and make use of social support networks. However, it is possible that the benefits of social support plateau with only one or two supportive individuals. Additional sources of support may not necessarily increase the effect on life satisfaction

A second possible factor that may have influenced the findings for this study is the measurement tool used for social support. The Luben Social Network Scale (LSNS) asks about the number of family members, friends, and peers (other widow(er)s) the participants hears from and with whom they feel as though they can call and discuss private matters. The scale does not account for the quality of each relationship. So, participants with one or two close relationships on which they rely heavily and which they use very effectively for social support would have low scores on this scale. Further research is needed considering the frequency of use of social support networks, regardless of the number of people in each participant's network, and also the depth of disclosure in these relationships before discounting use of social support networks as significant resilience process.

Social support and distress disclosure seem logically to be related to each other because disclosure occurs in the context of support networks. It is unexpected, but possibly meaningful, that neither of these two variables resulted in significant relationships with life satisfaction. Future research should include a broader range of participants who are farther removed from the date of the death of their spouse. Also, different measures of life satisfaction or well-being should be used. The last question in the SWLS asks, "If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing." Although the SWLS demonstrated inter-item reliability, the wording of this question may not be useful for measuring well-being in bereaved spouses based on the implication that by not wanting to change anything, they may be saying that they would have still wanted their spouse to die.

Gender Differences

Results of this study should be interpreted cautiously because 95% of the sample was female and findings may be different in a more gender-balanced sample. For example, previous research demonstrates gender differences in use of social support. Women perceive more available support than do men, and are better than men at recognizing various types of support (Hanasono et al., 2011). Also, Burleson et al., (2011) found that bereaved women were better than bereaved men at processing supportive messages because of higher levels of ability and motivation.

Previous research has also found that women are more able to provide support than men are (Flaherty & Richman, 1989). However, men's life satisfaction may be less affected by social support after bereavement. Women rely more on social support than men do for perceived well-being (Flaherty & Richman, 1989). Findings of Stroebe, Stroebe, and Abakoumkin (1999) provide further support for the influence of social support on gender, finding that among bereaved spouses, men had less support available to them but the decreased support did not influence men's scores for depression or loneliness. Bereaved females however, scored higher on measures of depression and anxiety than bereaved males (Chiu, Yin, Hsieh, Wu, Chuang & Huang, 2011), which may suggest lower levels of life satisfaction and hopefulness for bereaved females.

In addition to gender differences for social support and life satisfaction there are also gender differences in expressiveness and disclosure that could influence the results of this study. Women see themselves as more expressive than men and men view themselves as more instrumental than women (Hanasono et al., 2011). These differences

may influence the ways that men and women interact within their social support networks and how much is disclosed. For instance, when evaluating an ongoing emotional connection to someone who is deceased, men perceived the ongoing connection negatively while women viewed the connection as a positive adaptation to bereavement (Sochos & Bone, 2012). The negative assessment of maintaining a connection to the deceased may result in less frequent use of social support by men than women, less disclosure, and less influence of these variables on life satisfaction. Also, men and women use different criteria when decided whether or not to disclose (Petronio, Martin, & Littlefield, 1984). These gender differences may influence degree and frequency of disclosure and a sample with an equal number of men might have had different results.

Finally, a widower's support system may be change more after the death a spouse than it does for a widow because men are more likely than women to consider their spouse as one of their most important confidants (House, 2002). The absence of a confidant served as a protective factor against depression related to bereavement in older adults (Lowenthal & Haven, 1968). In fact, widows who had a confidant reported higher levels of morale than their married counterparts who did not have a confidant (Lowenthal & Haven, 1968). Thus, for men, the loss of a spouse may have a greater impact on availability of social support, resilience, and life satisfaction than it does for women.

Processes Versus Trait

Comparison of three models in this study determined that the relationship between trait resilience and life satisfaction is best represented as one mediated by resilience processes. This finding supports a process-based approach to resilience. However, trait resilience did influence the resilience processes in this study and had an indirect effect on life satisfaction. These results indicate that while the benefits of trait resilience are relevant and should not be ignored, communication processes that are useful in constructing resilience can provide even greater and more direct benefits for enhancing life satisfaction. The mediated relationship between resilience and life satisfaction suggests that personality characteristics associated with resilience are instrumental primarily because they enable individuals to make use of good strategies to deal with adversity. The factors that ultimately influence life satisfaction are those of hopefulness and of skillfully managing boundary turbulence. Trait resilience is important to life satisfaction because of its influence on the communication processes that influence life satisfaction.

Similar to results from this study, previous research found evidence for dispositional resilience as a mediator between perceived stress and life satisfaction for widows later in life (Rossi et al., 2007). The construct of dispositional resilience includes three dimensions similar to the resilience processes investigated in this study. They are commitment or involvement with other people, control or influence over outcomes, and feeling challenged or learning from a difficult experience (Antonovsky, 1979, as cited in Rossi et al.). The three dimensions of dispositional resilience align with the processes of

resilience in the mediated model. For instance, one's likelihood to connect is associated with using social networks, control is reflected in one's ability to control one's own private information and minimize boundary turbulence, and finally, the tendency to learn from an experience reflects one's hopefulness and likelihood to focus on the positive aspects of a situation, set goals, and then consider plans to attain those goals. Because these similar processes did relate to life satisfaction in previous research, more examination of these processes may reveal a more complete picture of the interrelationship between these processes, hardship, and life satisfaction.

Results from this study as well as previous research (Rossi et al., 2007) provide compelling evidence that communication scholars can develop interventions and skills training in the resilience processes that will assist bereaved individuals and other who are dealing with trauma and crisis experience greater life satisfaction. In other words, whether or not someone may have the characteristics associated with trait resilience, or the external protective or risk factors, they can improve their levels of life satisfaction by constructing resilience through management of privacy boundaries and focusing on hopefulness. Also, communication scholars can begin to investigate other communication processes that may have a positive influence on life satisfaction, particularly as a part of an overall picture of resilience.

This finding is particularly important because communication scholars and practitioners can intervene in the process and, regardless of life circumstance and history, can improve the perceived quality of a bereaved spouse's life, and, perhaps, the lives of other individuals who are dealing with difficult life circumstances. Potential

interventions and skills training can provide practical assistance immediately following a negative life event, such as the death of a spouse, as well as ongoing development of competencies that demonstrate a relationship to life satisfaction.

Practical Implications

Findings in this study suggest that widows who report higher levels of trait resilience are better able to use some resilience process, resulting in higher levels of well-being and life satisfaction. These results suggest that while trait resilience is a key factor in overcoming adversity, our ability to influence life satisfaction lies in the use of some processes to construct resilience. Findings in this study are particularly encouraging because they indicate that interventions and skills training in what Buzzanell (2010) calls “transferrable processes” may improve perceptions of life satisfaction. Researchers can continue to investigate the specific skills and behaviors that help widows adapt after the death of their spouse and also, those skills that may allow them to improve their overall sense of well-being and life satisfaction. Because many factors that affect resilience are outside of an individual’s control, such as parental psychopathology (Masten et al, 1995), socioeconomic factors (Rutter, 1979), health issues (Werner, 1986), or being an only child (Rutter, 1990; Werner), discovering variables within an individual’s control is particularly valuable. One of the most important implications of this finding is that researchers, theorists, and therapists can work towards developing a set of skills that can be shared with the widowed community. If resilience processes can be influenced, learned, and changed by the individual and through education, communication scholars can enhance the well-being of bereaved

spouses in a very practical manner. Unlike a trait-based approach to resilience, a process orientation allows for the possibility to improve an individual's ability to be flexible and resilient in the face of adversity, beyond one's initial level of trait resilience. Results of this study offer support for the utility of a process-based approach. Skills such as establishing and communicating privacy boundaries may be valuable avenues to explore and further research may be able to confirm that these skills can be used to alleviate some of the added stress that boundary turbulence causes for bereaved spouses in their relationships.

One of the first practical steps resulting from this study is that these findings will be shared with the director and participants at Camp Widow before the next session. Several participants as well as the director of the camp requested a follow-up discussion once the study was completed. They have been contacted and the researcher is presenting the results at the next upcoming camp as well as a workshop helping to explain the implications of the results of this study and to express the potential of this line of research to have a positive influence on the lived experiences of younger widows.

If individuals can learn how to manage their private information and renegotiate privacy boundaries after the death of a spouse, perhaps they will find greater satisfaction as they work through the changes necessitated by their new widowed status. Furthermore, although the amount of disclosure and use of social networks did not have a direct influence on a bereaved individual's rating of life satisfaction, a state of hopefulness did have a strong influence on satisfaction. Therefore, perhaps if bereaved individuals can be encouraged to focus on the positive feelings and reinforce positive

feelings about their future, they can be more satisfied with their bereavement process, regardless of the amount of distress they choose to disclose to their social networks. More research is needed to further explore the possible interpretations of these findings, but they provide a good basis from which to proceed.

Limitations and Future Research

The majority of the participants in this study were white, female, and wealthy. The demographics of the sample may be partially due to the location and expense of the camp. The camp is held in an expensive hotel in San Diego, California. The price of the camp registration was \$375 for the weekend and expenses for the hotel were approximately \$250 per night. The expense associated with camp attendance likely limited the income level of participants as well as the increasing the likelihood that participants would have strong support networks. For example, since more than three quarters of the participants have children and are not remarried, the participants are likely to have at least one supportive person in their life to allow them to travel alone for the weekend. The average income level for the sample was about \$68,000, and since 94% of the participants are not remarried, that reflects individual income. The level of income increases the likelihood that participants do not have to worry about finances, which can be a factor in adjustment to spousal bereavement (Steele, 1992.) Also, the voluntary nature of the study may have resulted in individuals who are more likely to want to disclose about their bereavement experience. Additionally, members of this population self-selected to attend a weekend conference designed to offer peer-to-peer workshops and connect with other widowed individuals. Many participants heard about

the camp through social networking sites and so are likely to be technically literate and seeking social support from others in the widowed community. So participants are members of the widowed community who are likely to seek out and use social support networks and who desire to identify as a widow still.

This study was designed for a specific population, younger bereaved spouses. However, the instruments used in this study were not specific to the context but could be used in any population. For instance, the resilience scale (Wagnild & Young, 1993; Niell & Dias, 2001) is an instrument that has been validated in a variety of contexts and samples but is not specifically designed with for a widowed population. The same is true for all instruments except the distress disclosure which was modified to include the phrase “about the death of my spouse” to make it more specific to this particular sample.

There are some benefits to choosing more general instruments. For example, the boundary turbulence scale was intended to capture the difficulties experienced by bereaved spouses in all areas of their private information and not just related to their spouses’ death. In previous interviews (West, in press), bereaved spouses expressed concern over privacy boundaries around topics not related to their spouses’ death such as their financial and parenting information. For this reason, an instrument that is not context specific is meaningful. However, future research may consider the advantages of developing and using instruments that are specifically developed for this particular context. For example, it may be more meaningful to measure how hopeful an individual feels about recovering from the disruption and grief related to the loss of a partner, than it is to measure their overall feelings of hopefulness. For future investigation, researchers

should carefully consider the goals, benefits, and limitations of using context specific instruments as compared to more general instruments.

Future research should consider the question of social support and the influence it has on well-being and adjustment after the death of a spouse. Results for social support were particularly surprising in this study. Although measures of social support were not significant in this study, more investigation should be done to determine if a high quality of a specific type of social support is more beneficial than others, rather than basing the measurement on frequency of contact and number of supportive individuals available.

Future research could take a qualitative approach and investigate the ways bereaved spouses report their use of social support and what types of support they report as most beneficial. Future investigations may benefit from interviews with bereaved spouses to gain a better understanding of social support strategies and the role they play in the lived experiences of this particular population. If bereaved spouses could talk about what types of social support they currently use, what social support behaviors they find beneficial, and where they find their best social support, scholars could work to find way to enhance those benefits. Also, it may be useful to consider multiple types of social support such as online support as compared to face-to-face support.

In conversation with camp participants, many widows mentioned frequent use of online support groups. Future research should consider computer-mediated social support used by bereaved spouses. Previous research has suggested that connectivity to others online was associated with a decrease in some negative mental and physical outcomes of bereavement, and predicted higher ratings of overall quality of life

(Vanderwerker & Prigerson, 2004). Also, the frequency of use of online support predicted the level of satisfaction participants reported with support they received and was associated with reduced life stress (Wright, 1999). Wright specifically considered the satisfaction with received support. Future research could take a similar approach to investigate the satisfaction participants experience with different types of support, rather than simply measuring the number of supportive individuals available and the frequency of contact with those individuals. Not only is it important to investigate the useful social support behaviors but it would also be meaningful to discover what kinds of support bereaved spouses are offered that either are not helpful or have a negative psychological or emotional impact.

Additionally, more investigation is needed into the effects of distress disclosure and the use of social networks. Since neither of these seemingly related variables demonstrated a significant effect on life satisfaction, despite predictions based on previous research, clarification of the benefits and drawbacks of distress disclosure would provide some much needed guidance for recently bereaved individuals. Also, researchers might evaluate the effect time has on the relationship between disclosure and satisfaction. Perhaps most importantly, communication scholars should aggressively seek out communication processes that are related to life satisfaction and that may be relevant in a broader construct of resilience. This particular communication behavior, along with others, may be influenced by time.

The effects of spousal bereavement and the coping strategies of bereaved spouses may change as more time passes after the death of one's spouse. Regression was used to

assess the influence that time since the death of the participants' spouse had on the scores for trait resilience, distress disclosure, social support, boundary turbulence and hope. In this study, time explained 12.6% of the variance for hope ($F[1,144] = 20.58, p < .001$), 10.6% of the variance for life satisfaction ($F[1,146] = 17.00, p < .05$), 4.3% of the variance for trait resilience ($F[1,146] = 6.31, p < .05$), and 3.9% of the variance for boundary turbulence ($F[1,146] = 5.69, p < .05$). Time was not a significant predictor for distress disclosure and social support. These results suggest that time plays an important role in bereavement. Future research should investigate the influence of time on spousal bereavement and consider longitudinal data collection.

Finally, researchers should gather more data using other populations to confirm findings and explore new ones. The current study does not include enough men to make any meaningful interpretations for widowers. Men may be less likely to participate in group support gathers such as Camp Widow, so other recruiting methods might be able to reach a more balanced sample. Also, using online recruiting methods like the widowed blogs might reach a sample with a larger range of income levels since many of the individuals who are frequent contributors to the blogs could not spend the money to attend the camp. Even this recruiting method is limiting because it would only access individuals who are online and self-selecting to seek support, take a survey, and who own a computer and have Internet access. Perhaps, future research could also connect with participants through social organizations such as Hospice to broaden the sample demographics.

Chapter Five: Summary

Findings in this study offer support of communication process-based approach to resilience. Resilience processes provide the link between traits of resilience and their importance as positive factors after the death of a spouse. Trait resilience is valuable because it results in an individual's ability to make better use of particular strategies thought to be useful during bereavement. Although some of these strategies did not result in significant relationships in the current study, previous research has demonstrated their importance in other populations and other contexts.

Additionally, maintaining a sense of hopefulness is one of the most influential factors related to life satisfaction. This process may be related to other variables such as distress disclosure and use of social support networks, which were not significant in the study. However, a sense of hopefulness may be influenced by use of positive language and reframing strategies employed within social networks. A focus on hopefulness is something that can be practiced and directed, thus positively affecting life satisfaction.

Findings in this study also offer further evidence supporting CPM theory (Petronio, 2002). Results regarding the influence of boundary turbulence on life satisfactions highlight the importance of skillfully negotiation privacy boundaries during a time of increased risk for turbulence.

Many of the scholarly discussions of resilience include communication components, however, communication scholars are largely absent from the conversation.

Researchers and scholars in communication have valuable contributions to make to the body of literature on resilience and should feel encouraged to pursue further investigation into the field of resilience.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Resilience Scale (Wagnild & Young, 1993, modified by Neill & Dias, 2001)

Resilience

Below are several statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding. The 7-point scale is:

1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4= neither agree nor disagree,

5 = slightly agree, 6 – agree, 7 = strongly agree.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. When I make plans I follow through with them. | | | | | | | |
| 2. I usually manage one way or another | | | | | | | |
| 3. I feel proud that I have accomplished things in my life | | | | | | | |
| 4. I usually take things in my stride | | | | | | | |
| 5. I am friends with myself. | | | | | | | |
| 6. I am determined | | | | | | | |
| 7. I have self-discipline | | | | | | | |
| 8. I keep interested in things. | | | | | | | |
| 9. I can usually find something to laugh about. | | | | | | | |
| 10. My belief in myself gets me through hard times. | | | | | | | |
| 11. I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways. | | | | | | | |
| 12. My life has meaning | | | | | | | |
| 13. When I am in a difficult situation, I can usually | | | | | | | |
| find my way out of it. | | | | | | | |

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14. I have enough energy to do what I have to do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15. In most ways my life is close to my ideal. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 16. The conditions of my life are excellent. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 17. I am satisfied with my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 19. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Appendix B

Distress Disclosure Index (DDI; Kahn & Hessling, 2001)

	“Support”				
	Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		
1. When I feel upset about the death of my spouse, I usually confide in my friends.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I prefer not to talk about my spouse’s death	1	2	3	4	5
3. When something unpleasant happens to me, related to my spouse’s death, I often look for someone to talk to.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I typically don’t discuss things that upset me about my spouse’s death.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When I feel depressed or sad about my spouse’s death, I tend to keep those feelings to myself.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I try to find people to talk with about my spouse’s death.	1	2	3	4	5
7. When I am in a bad mood, related to the death of my spouse, I talk about it with my friends.	1	2	3	4	5
8. If I have a bad day, related to the death of my spouse, the last thing I want to do is talk about it.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I rarely look for people to talk with when I am having a problem related to my spouse’s death.	1	2	3	4	5
10. When I’m distressed about my spouse’s death, I don’t tell anyone.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I usually seek out someone to talk to when I am in a bad mood about something related to the death of my spouse.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am willing to tell others my distressing thoughts about the death of my spouse.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C

The State Hope Scale

Goals

Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes how you think about yourself right now and put that number in the blank provided.

Please take a few moments to focus on yourself and what is going on in your life at this moment. Once you have this "here and now" set, go ahead and answer each item according to the following scale:

1 = Definitely False 2 = Mostly False 3 = Somewhat False 4 = Slightly False 5 = Slightly True

6 = Somewhat True 7 = Mostly True 8 = Definitely True

	Definitely False					Definitely True.			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1. If I should find myself in a jam, I could think of many ways to get out of it									
2. At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my goals.									
3. There are lots of ways around any problem that I am facing now.									
4. Right now I see myself as being pretty successful.									
5. I can think of many ways to reach my current goals									
6. At this time, I am meeting the goals that I have set for myself.									

Appendix D

MODIFIED LUBBEN SOCIAL NETWORK SCALE—9-Item Version

Support

FAMILY: *Considering the people to whom you are related either by birth or marriage . . .*

- | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---|---|--------|--------|----|
| 1. How many relatives do you see or hear from at least once a month? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9+ |
| 2. How many relatives do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9+ |
| 3. How many relatives do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9+ |

FRIENDSHIPS: *Considering all of your friends who are not widows or widowers, including those who live in your neighborhood:*

- | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---|---|--------|--------|----|
| 4. How many of your friends do you see or hear from at least once a month? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9+ |
| 5. How many friends do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9+ |
| 6. How many friends do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9 |

WIDOW/WIDOWER PEERS: *Considering all of your friends who are widows or widowers:*

- | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---|---|--------|--------|----|
| 7. How many of your peers do you see or hear from at least once a month? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9+ |
| 5. How many peers do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9+ |
| 6. How many peers do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters? | none | 1 | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 9+ |

Appendix E

Boundary Turbulence Scale

This questionnaire asks you to reflect on your experiences with sharing *private information* with others.

For this study, *private information* refers to anything about yourself that you consider private or personal where you would like to control who knows this information about you.

Consider how often you experience the following and circle the corresponding response:

1. When I share my private information with someone, I worry about them repeating what I've said to others.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
2. When I share private information with someone, they think they can decide when it is okay to tell others.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
3. Others accidentally share my private information when I wish they wouldn't.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
4. I am unsure about if I shared too much or too little information.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
5. I am unsure if people I share private information with know that they should keep it private.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
6. I feel as though others are discussing my private information.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
7. I feel frustrated because others do not have the same ideas as I do about the importance of keeping private information just between us.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
8. When I share private information I make others feel uncomfortable.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
9. I feel as though too many people have access to my private information.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
10. I get caught up in a very personal conversation in a public place (e.g. a coffee shop) and later realize that other people might have been listening.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*
11. I struggle with the decision about sharing someone else's private information.
5 - *Very Frequently* 4 - *Frequently* 3 - *Occasionally* 2 - *Rarely* 1 - *Very Rarely*

12. I know private information about others that I would rather not know.

5 -Very Frequently 4 – Frequently 3 – Occasionally 2 – Rarely 1 -Very Rarely

Can you describe an example of a time when you had to redraw some personal boundaries with a family member, friend or peer since the death of your spouse? (Please share as much information as you are comfortable with sharing and feel free to use the back this sheet if you need more space.)

Appendix F

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding. The 7-point scale is: 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4= neither agree nor disagree, 5 = slightly agree, 6 – agree, 7 = strongly agree.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| _____ | 1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal. |
| _____ | 2. The conditions of my life are excellent. |
| _____ | 3. I am satisfied with my life. |
| _____ | 4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life. |
| _____ | 5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing. |

Appendix G

Participant information

Current age (in years) _____

Age at time of bereavement (in years) _____

Time passed (in months), since your spouse died _____

How long were you married (in years and months)? _____

Which best describes how your spouse died? (Check one)

_____ Illness (acute) _____ Accident

_____ Illness (chronic) _____ Violence

Other: _____

Do you have children Yes No

If yes, what are the ages and sex of your child(ren)?

age: _____	male	female
age: _____	male	female
age: _____	male	female
age: _____	male	female

Are you remarried? Yes No

If yes, how long have you been remarried (in years and months)? _____

Approximate household annual income: \$ _____

Race: Please check all that apply

_____ White
_____ Black or African American
_____ American Indian and Alaska Native
_____ Asian
_____ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
_____ Other _____

This study was approved by the University of Denver's Institutional Review Board on 06/14/20.

